ENCOUNTER

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Peter Wildeblood

What Clothes the Wazir Wore . . . .

or: "A Gorger on the Kenner"

IN THE story of Heart's-Miracle, Lieutenant of the Birds, we are told that the Prince of Believers disguised himself as a plain citizen and wandered about the streets unrecognised—a feat made all the more striking by the fact that he was accompanied by his wazir Jafar the Barmecide, Ishak his cup-companion, Masrur the sword-bearer of his vengeance, al-Fadl the brother of Jafar, and Yunus the scribe, all dressed in garments which gave them "the appearance of a band of simple brothers." Exactly how this was achieved, Scheherazade maddeningly omits to say. What clothes the wazir wore, and what accents the prince assumed when he hid himself among beggars must remain puzzling questions, though not beyond all conjecture.

Whatever the secret was, it has been lost. The nightly ramblings of Haroun al-Raschid represent the peak of the art of slumming, and we cannot believe that any comparable success attended a recent half-hearted attempt to follow his method. Miss Pat Hornsby-Smith and Mr. Jocelyn Simon, it will be remembered, took it upon themselves to investigate the alleged improprieties taking place in the Commercial Road; and according to the newspapers they "were dressed as unobtrusively as possible, so that they could mingle with the crowds unobserved. They were accompanied by a uniformed policeman." Parliamentary Secretaries, had they existed at the court of Baghdad, would have been simmered in pitch for such a lack of tact.

The difficulty of "mingling unobserved" with any crowd composed of persons of a different caste is apparent to any student of English literature. At its two extremes it may be most clearly seen in the attempts of Ouida to envisage life in the Brigade of Guards, and in the solitary and disastrous descent into the underworld, in *The Princess Casamassima*, of Henry James. There can have been few writers less well equipped by temperament to undertake such a journey. To begin with, as he states in the preface to the novel, James was determined "not to attribute feeling, or feelings, to persons who would not in all probability have had any to speak of." The attitude is that of Lord Curzon who, when he came unexpectedly upon some soldiers bathing, observed that he never knew the lower classes had such white skins.

James prepared himself for the writing of his book by a series of nightly walks in North London and other uncongenial districts, observing, presumably through the lace curtains of the dwellings of the poor, the exotic details with which he meant to clothe his plot: "on Sundays they had muffins, and sometimes for a change a smoked haddock or even a fried sole." The plot itself was curiously perfunctory, involving a bookbinder from Pentonville named Hyacinth Robinson, a bosomy Cockney girl called Millicent, and an anarchistic conspiracy the exact nature of which the author was too reluctant, or perhaps too uninterested, to reveal.

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The Princess herself was an unmistakably Jamesian creation, beautiful, spirited, and rich, who had already appeared in *Roderick Hudson*, and was now alleged to be possessed by the demon of social conscience—a device which enabled James, convinced as he was that the capacity of the working classes for emotion was severely limited, to express his surprise and alarm through what he took to be a more sensitive mouthpiece.

The Princess Casamassima took pains to immerse herself in the life of the poor, even to the extent of exchanging her mansion for "a queer little cockneyfied retreat" in a street called Madeira Crescent. Moreover, she left the decorations of the place unchanged, for "it was plainly her theory that the right way to acquaint one's self with the sensations of the wretched was to suffer the anguish of exasperated taste." The exasperations included a plaster cupid, a cottage piano, and a bread-and-marmalade high tea, to say nothing of anarchistic plottings and the devotion of Hyacinth. That James was enchanted by the Princess and bored by his other characters we cannot doubt; even their conversation has an air of not being intended for belief:

"'You precious little rascal, you've got something on your heart!' said Millicent. 'Has your Princess given you the sack?'

'My poor girl, your talk's a queer mixture,' he resignedly sighed."

As well he might. The speech-rhythms of people like Hyacinth and Millicent quite eluded James, who thought, like so many other novelists on the same misguided path, that working-class dialogue could be reproduced by the mere occasional insertion of a vulgar phrase like "given you the sack." In the surroundings of which he usually wrote, his subtle ear was tuned to catch the least shade of meaning as it revealed itself in conversation, and we can only conclude that his failure in *The Princess Casamassima* was due mainly to ignorance of the inhabitants of Madeira Crescent, and perhaps partly to the indifference which led him to build his story around an underground movement so subterranean that its nature and workings are impossible to apprehend.

Another novelist of the same period, George Gissing, took more elaborate pains to immerse himself in proletarian life. He took a furnished room in Lambeth, visited a lunatic asylum, a hat-factory, and a die-cutter's workshop, and formed the habit of prowling about the streets of South London on Bank Holidays in search of local colour. Less impersonal than Henry James, he even took the step, later to be much regretted, of marrying a Mancunian prostitute by the name of Nell, first courting her with the gift of a sewing-machine so that she could abandon her profession. There must have been times when Nell experienced all the emotions of Somerset Maugham's Sadie Thompson vis-à-vis the Reverend Davidson. Gissing, a man of sensibility who once expressed horror at Thomas Hardy's blunt talk about a pig's pizzle, was accustomed to address his wife as "fair Emelye"; their association, however, soon declined from its first romantic plane and ended in a squalid mess of illness, debts, and rancour. The entanglement was echoed in all of Gissing's early novels; in the life of the poor he saw no richness, no humour of a Dickensian kind, but only a grinding bleakness devoid of any human dignity. The manner which he displayed in his first novel, *Workers of the Dawn*, has been described by an otherwise sympathetic biographer as being "like an officious leader of a Cook's tour of the slums."

It was, of course, nearly impossible for the Victorian novelists to take anything but a bird's-eye view of the working class. Their slumming expeditions were undertaken with too high a purpose; they were forever seeking or delivering messages. Like a flock of carrier-pigeons they wheeled around in the smoky air over Poplar, Walthamstow, and Canning Town, cooing with social consciousness and scratching briefly on the window-sills of the tenements with their scrupulous pink feet. The most successful were those who, like Dickens and Hardy, were imaginative enough to invent a landscape of their own and people it with their own creations. The London of, for instance, *Bleak House*, is

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by no means the same city as that described by Henry Mayhew in his *London Labour and the London Poor*; it is a parallel, selective picture designed to show off the sentiment and melodrama which were the author's perilous stock in trade. As has often been pointed out, the social anger of Dickens is largely an illusion; it is directed as much at the reformers as at the conditions which they are trying to relieve. The world of Dickens is an imaginary one in which the messages cancel each other out; that of Hardy, an imaginary one in which there are no messages at all.

But the English novel of rusticity, from its birth-pangs with *Euphues* to its death-rattle with *Cold Comfort Farm*, deserves an essay to itself. It is better here to concentrate on the attempts that have been made, more and more frequently since the turn of the century, to find in the low life of the metropolis a subject for exploitation by the locust army of fiction-writers. The failure of most of these attempts is only too apparent; a short list of Great Cockney Novels would be very short indeed.

WHY? The stock answer is that Cockney is no longer a living language, that it is quite deficient in the qualities of flexibility, poetry, muscularity, and wit which commended, for example, the native speech of the Southern States and of Ireland respectively to Tennessee Williams and to Synge. This myth is nourished every time that a play or film, ostensibly set in the East End, is put through the mincing-machine of performance by a West End cast. One of the weirdest examples in recent years was the film of *A Kid for Two Farthings*, in which, it will be remembered, Petticoat Lane was rendered even more confusing than usual by the presence in it of Miss Celia Johnson and Miss Diana Dors, the one speaking in the accents of Kensington Gore, the other in those of Sunset Boulevard. Film producers, when taxed with such solecisms, reply that no English film can earn its keep without a showing in America, and that American audiences can scarcely understand B.B.C. English, let alone anything else. Meanwhile the London masses sit entranced by the mumbles of Marlon Brando and James Dean, and assimilate their most cryptic phrases into the supposedly dead language which they speak at home.

The assertion that Cockney is a moribund tongue is plainly not true, as half an hour with Partridge's *Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English* will show. Continually revised and now running to 1,230 pages, this bulky work still lags breathlessly behind the spoken language, never quite catching up with the daily accretions of Brooklynese, Romany, vestigial rhyming slang, literal translations from the French, comic catchwords, rag-trade Yiddish, pidgin-English, B.A.O.R. *plattdeutsch*, and onomatopoeic noises which we hear around us whenever we board a bus.

Mr. Partridge does his best, and his dictionary, eked out with a few tape-recordings and buried in concrete under the next skyscraper, may give our great-grandchildren a working knowledge of the way in which people spoke in 1957. The novels now being written certainly will not; and least of all those which purport to deal with low life, or specifically with the underworld. In the thirties, Wilfred Macartney, an observant prisoner at Parkhurst, was already noting the rift between the two sets of people to whom crime was their bread and butter, the criminals and the detective-story writers: "If ever a writer was detested, Edgar Wallace was detested by the lags. How they hated him! 'Publicity expert for the Yard!' 'Never met a crook in his life!' It is indeed amazing to the initiated how sublimely ignorant Wallace was of the life or dealings of crooked people. He was unable to get one thing right. He tripped up on the smallest technical detail, which in itself was enough to damn him in the lags' eyes." They appreciated O. Henry and Dostoievsky, because both of them had "done time" and knew what they were talking about, and Patrick Hamilton's early novels (*The Midnight Bell*, *Siege of Pleasure*, and *Plains of Cement*) were said to be "technically impeccable."

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In the prison libraries to-day Peter Cheyney and all the rest of the rump-fed Runyons are looked upon as writers of fairy-tales for straight people; like cowboy stories, their books have a merely symbolic relation to the real life of the streets. And this is not only because their plots are implausible. The same might be said of Raymond Chandler, James M. Cain, or Willard Motley. But the Americans know their landscapes and the sounds to be heard in them; the archetypal American crime-writer has been in his time a paper-boy, a reporter, a dishwasher, a night-club barman, a Chicago meat-packer, and probably an elevator-operator as well, while his English counterpart is more likely to be a rural female don. It is all part of the great English literary conspiracy to conceal the existence of a huge and vivacious working class in which crime is one of the realities, like ambition, hunger, gaiety, or lust. Reading the current detective-stories one would imagine that ninety per cent. of crime in England was in the form of unexpected interruptions to country house-parties.

PERHAPS the authors should not be blamed too much. They are, after all, only concerned to give their audience what it wants: weed-killer in the vicarage crumpets, rather than a broken bottle on the bombed site. The pursuit of truth in unfashionable streets is an exercise that can be safely left to eccentric intellectuals like Orwell and W. H. Davies, provided that they don't get too near the knuckle. In his preface to *The Autobiography of a Super-Tramp*, Bernard Shaw felt obliged to write: "These pudent pages are unstained with the frightful language, the debased dialect, of the fictitious proletarians of Mr. Rudyard Kipling and other genteel writers. In them the patrons of the casual ward and the doss-house argue with the decorum of Socrates, and narrate in the style of Tacitus." Coming from the creator of Eliza Doolittle, this is odd indeed, though not so odd from the author of *Getting Married*.

The "fictitious proletarians" of Kipling are by no means as false as Shaw pretended. Having been trained as a reporter, he possessed an acute ear for dialogue. For example, in "The Record of Badalia Herodsfoot":

" 'Where's my wife?' said Tom. 'Where's my slut of a wife?'

'Upstairs and be—— to her,' said the old woman, falling over on her side. ' 'Ave you come back for 'er, Tom?'

'Yes. 'Oo's she took up while I bin gone?'

'All the bloomin' curicks in the parish. She's that set up you wouldn't know 'er.'

' 'Strewth she is!'

'Oh, yuss. Mor'n that, she's always round an' about with them sniffin' Sisters of Charity an' the curick. . . . An' she keeps me outer the food-stuff they gets for me lyin' dyin' out 'ere like a dorg. She's been a blazin' bad 'un has Badalia since you lef'."

Now, this has all the fatiguing faults of the Victorian novelists: the inaccurate attempts at a phonetic spelling, the coy substitutes for swear-words, and above all the brimstone-and-treacle mixture of sensationalism and social conscience. But it also has the right rhythm. It has the sound of the East End, as *Ulysses* has the sound of Dublin:

" 'Hoho, begob,' says I to myself, says I. 'That explains the milk in the cocoanut and the absence of hair on the animal's chest. . . . That's the bucko that'll organise her, take my tip. 'Twixt me and you, Caddereesh!"

Or *Baby Doll* of Mississippi:

" 'Because in the first place, I didn't have the money to pay for a hotel room, because you don't give me any money, because you don't have any money, and secondly, because if I had the money I couldn't have no way of getting there because you went off in the Chevy, and leave me no way of getting anywhere, including to the fire which I wanted to see just like everyone else.' "

The cadences of such passages, it will be observed, are independent of their sense. Their rhythms are as distinct as those of the Italian or Scandinavian languages. We would recognise them even if we could not understand a word.

BUT most writers who attempt to reproduce the London vernacular are too busy with the incidentals—the dropped H's,

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the intrusive R's, the vowels twisted into diphthongs, the repetitive obscenities. They ignore the fact that recognisable Cockney can be written without recourse to any of these aids:

"'Oh God-a-mugger!' grumbled Young Bob. . . .

'And don't you start God-a-muggering me!' shouted his mother. 'Don't you God-a-mugger me, you dirty little whelp! Don't you start suggesting as though your mother was a nuisance when she's working for you morning, noon, and night. Don't you suppose that because you're earning twopence three-farthings at a barber's that it gives you the right to sauce your mother. Say God-a-mugger to me again, and I'll clout you so that you don't know where your God is and where your mugger is neither, no!'"

This musical tirade is by Ernest Raymond (*The Marsh*)—a novelist with a widespread and durable reputation in prison and in the municipal libraries. Mr. Raymond is intermittently discovered by the fourpenny Sunday newspapers, but his support comes mainly from readers who are in a better position to assess the accuracy of his style. His success illustrates the falsity of the myth that the working-class reader lives exclusively on a diet of paper-back novelettes or, as Mr. Richard Hoggart puts it, candy floss. You may search Mr. Hoggart's *The Uses of Literacy* from hard-cover to hard-cover without finding any clue that there is a working-class audience for similar volumes; and this in a country which has the highest annual output of new titles in the world, and one of the highest figures for readership. In the first half of the book, which deals with the prevailing customs in the urban Yorkshire of the author's childhood, the reportage rings so true that many respectable reviewers, predictable as Pavlov's dogs, have swallowed Mr. Hoggart's subsequent conclusions without a murmur of dissent; Mr. Mark Abrams alone has pointed out that a generation of children unable to care less was the logical result—without any help from advertising or the cinema—of the upbringing described with admiration by Mr. Hoggart. It is a great misfortune that the two most highly praised books on this subject, *The Uses of Literacy* and Mr. Geoffrey Gorer's *Exploring English Character*, should each have been vitiated by an unscientific approach.

Social anthropology is the best of all possible bulldozers for clearing ground that has become overgrown with misconceptions. When Dr. Hortense Powdermaker turned a clinical eye on *Hollywood, the Dream Factory* in 1950, she made possible a rich crop of novels, films, plays, and *New Yorker* articles which showed the film colony in a less glamorous but much more interesting light: *Sunset Boulevard*, Lillian Ross's *Picture*, Schulberg's *What Makes Sammy Run*, *A Star is Born*. In the same way, Dr. Pitt-Rivers's *People of the Sierra* has been followed by a number of books dealing realistically, rather than picturesquely, with life in Spain. It was to be hoped, therefore, that the publication of two books about the urban working classes would have equally fertile results.

Mr. Gorer, unfortunately, was hamstrung from the beginning by the fact that the questionnaires upon which he based his findings were distributed almost exclusively among readers of *The People*. Of all popular Sunday newspapers, this is the one most given to the "painful duty" method of presentation; its revelations are frequently wrapped up in a shocked assurance that the editor wouldn't touch them with a barge-pole if it wasn't for his sacred obligations to the Truth. The possibility that the readers of such a paper might have a natural bias towards hypocrisy seems to have escaped Mr. Gorer. Dead-pan, he tots up the results: the English consider themselves abnormally shy; they are surprisingly gentle, considering the characteristics of their great-grandparents, and, considering their newspapers, surprisingly chaste; they look upon the English Policeman with supreme trust and affection. The picture is odd, and when Mr. Gorer goes on to assert in a *New Statesman* article that the average working man is bitterly ashamed to help with the domestic chores, it becomes phantasmagoric.

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Mr. Hoggart, on the other hand, knows just what the working classes are like. He is himself a fugitive from Hunslet, and in *The Uses of Literacy* he has permitted himself a backward look, with the usual petrifying results. A pillar of intellectuality now, his eyes are fixed on the burning ruins of proletarian virtue, and not unnaturally he mistakes the neon glow of popular culture for the cause of the holocaust. Something dreadful has happened to Hunslet since Mr. Hoggart left it; it must be a consequence of that useful bogy, Admass. The salt tears of nostalgia blind him to the possibility that the "publications and entertainments" of which he writes—with never a reference to a hard-back book—may have an influence as temporary as that of sewage on a bed of mussels.

WHEN professional investigators are so myopic, it is not surprising that mere novelists are incapable of clear vision. The solution of most English intellectuals is to concentrate, in default of something indigenous, on the uncheckable assertions of foreign artists: to dote on the realistic squalor of Italian, Greek and Spanish films, and to buy Penguin copies of *A Woman of Rome* by the hundred thousand in the rapt belief that life on the streets is just like that. Even an interest in contemporary speech can only be expressed when the speech in question is American:

"I therefore fell greedily on this dictionary.... One could hold forth for pages on the fascinating terminology," writes Mr. Cyril Connolly in *The Sunday Times* after a thrilled perusal of *The Dictionary of American Underworld Lingo*. And yet while he is giving the big-eye ("a look of wonderment") to this rather slipshod volume, does it not make him hot in the biscuit ("angry") to reflect that the English vernacular is never likewise fixed in print? Why isn't Mr. Connolly (together with Mr. Osborne and Mr. Priestley and Miss Iris Murdoch) down in the Isle of Dogs, all ears?

When those who come after us scrabble in the ruins of our neo-Georgian office blocks and fall with an archæological whoop upon a cache of novels dating from the Age of Tranquillisers, they will firmly suppose that our social revolution had a curiously limited effect. What sort of upheaval was it, they will wildly ask themselves, that left no mark except upon the sex-lives of young provincial intellectuals? And who on earth were the deaf and dumb millions, the non-reading, non-writing, undescribed multitudes who filled the space between Clapham Common and Epping Forest?

We have seen that Dickens and Kipling began as assiduous journalists pursuing the route of Haroun al-Raschid through the gas-lit streets; but ambitious newspapermen nowadays go West, lured, like debased Children of Israel, by columns of gossip. Part-time novelists in red-brick universities do not consider the miners around them, as Lawrence did; they write about other part-time novelists in red-brick universities who humiliatingly chase rich girls. It has become the fashion to climb, rather than to slum, unless—like the Parliamentary Secretaries to the Home Office—you are accompanied by a uniformed policeman to show that your disguise is not meant to be impenetrable.

The missed opportunities are legion; the uncharted areas, immense. No one is investigating the bilingual Cockney child whose syntax rearranges itself kaleidoscopically as soon as he walks out of the school gates. No novelist has mapped the boundaries which sharply divide the North London villages of Highbury, Hoxton, Dalston, Canonbury, and Kingsland which Authority insensitively lumps together as Islington, or pinpointed the moment (Michael Arlen once said that he liked to collect Cohens and watch them turn into Colquhouns) at which the migrant instinct drags a family from the Commercial to the Finchley road. It has escaped the notice of detective-story writers that the most reliable clue to a person's criminality is the habit of tagging a question on to the end of an incontrovertible statement: "I been to the pictures with Violet, haven't I? She's my sister, isn't she?" Whole shelves of books give the crass impression that Teddy Boys and Stepney lightermen (introduced fleetingly for comic

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or sinister purposes) use the same phrases and pronunciation as the author's Earl's Court char.

THE obvious solution would be for the working classes to start writing novels about themselves. Their failure to do so is probably due to the tendency, exemplified by Mr. Hoggart, for intellectuals of proletarian origin to fly off into more bourgeois levels. There is a poignant description in Young and Willmott's *Family and Kinship in East London* of a bright Bethnal Green girl going to a grammar school: the other children in the street waylaid her every evening, rudely pointing at her black velour and shouting "Rotten 'at!" It is small wonder that such pariahs should develop into *New Statesman* readers, writing bitter novellas about other *New Statesman* readers. They want to put Bethnal Green as far behind them as they can.

But what of the writers who have already progressed as far as possible in the direction of the "U"? Cannot the wheel on which they are butterflies turn full circle and deposit, for example, Mr. Evelyn Waugh in the rich territory between Cable Street and Millwall? He could, at a pinch, he accompanied by a policeman or even by Jafar the Barmecide, Ishak his cup-companion, and Masrur the sword-bearer of his vengeance, though such an assembly might be rather too noticeable on a Number 15 bus. It would be a pity if the project were to be wrecked by a Cockney voice uttering the cry that every slummer dreads—the secret, fairground warning of "Dik! a gorger on the kenner!" which, as students of Partridge can verify, means "Look! A stranger on our pitch!"

The Departed

BEWARE of Time's own melancholy hands,
See how they fasten on the clock-face there
And spin the fingers round for your distress.
Useless to sit and wait, or brood and think
Of motor-cars and ships and aeroplanes,
For they are snails within Time's turbulence.

His one-way ticket sees him safely there.
He travels light and takes no change of clothes,
Or shaving kit, nor even boots to ease
What you would think a long and weary journey.

No telegram or letter called him there;
And yet, for urgency, he took no train
Or bus. He merely smiled and vanished, leaving
His pipe, unlit, upon the mantel-shelf.

Rex Taylor

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Gerald Brenan

The City of the Sybarites

ROSSANO, there can be no doubt about it, is the pleasantest town in the toe of Italy. As one comes up the steep hill from the railway station, between the red cliffs and the grey olive trees, one feels a thrill of expectation. Then one enters the clean, white street, passes a marble fountain on which Arion is shown locked in embrace with a dolphin and reaches the central square. Here a café has pushed out its tables into the roadway, some men smoking cheap cigars are sitting about and a boot-black, kneeling on his pad, is exchanging repartee with them. One feels at once that this is a place where life passes in a good-humoured, leisurely way with plenty of time for eating, drinking, and conversation.

A visit to the albergo confirms this impression. "Ingleesh!" exclaims the innkeeper in our own language. "Very pleased to meet you. We are very good friends of England here."

This comes as a surprise. During the past two weeks we have been having the Italian defeats in North Africa charged regularly to our account whenever we paid our bills. On one occasion they were added on to the price of our tickets at the railway station.

"Oh, yes," he went on. "All the people of Rossano were taken prisoner in Africa and sent to England. We worked on the farms. Very nice people on the farms, very good food, very nice weather, plenty of good rain. Wages, O.K."

"Very good food?" we asked incredulously.

"Oh, yes. Fried fish and chips, H.P. sauce, oatmeal porridge, corned beef with boiled potatoes, rice pudding. I am able to get corned beef still. There is a shop at Naples that has all the good English things. And, of course, tea. Everyone drinks tea now in Rossano. Very healthy."

"I prefer Italian food," I said.

"Well, in some things, perhaps. One day in England the farmer's wife promised me macaroni for a treat because I was Italian. But she cooked it with milk and sugar. Very kind of her, but not our Italian way."

The tables were already laid out and we sat down to eat. The first course was spaghetti served with tomato and meat sauce, after which we had fried seppia or cuttle-fish followed by *escalope de veau* and, for salad, *finocchio* or fennel bulbs. The wine—it was from Cirò—had a curious tang in it, slightly reminiscent of Cretan wine, and the coffee, like all Italian coffee, was admirable.

We were sipping our *strega* (an Italian Benedictine that has a sickly sinister taste reminiscent of an Aubrey Beardsley drawing) when the landlord came up to us.

"I want to introduce you to a friend of mine," he said. "He is the only man of military age in Rossano who did not go to England during the war."

A thin, shrunken figure with a long, melancholy face that looked as though it had been put through a mangle came up to us and shook our hands.

"Ah, *signore*," he said, "you see in me a very unfortunate person. I did not go to Africa with my comrades because when they left I was in hospital. Instead I was sent to the Russian front and there—there, you understand, one could not surrender."

Everyone nodded in sympathy and he went

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on to explain that this and many other sad things had happened to him in his life because he had been born under an unlucky star.

"I shall always be unlucky," he said. "Always. It is written in my horoscope."

We finished our coffee and went out to explore the town. Rossano, though its population is less than sixteen thousand, prides itself on possessing both an archbishop and a cathedral. As a building this cathedral is not interesting, but it contains two remarkable treasures. One of these is an *acheropita*, or miraculous ikon of the Virgin painted, as its Greek name declares, without hands. This gives it a slightly higher prestige value than those (there are quite a number of them in the neighbourhood) that were painted from life by St. Luke. It is shown under a peculiar lighting which prevents one from examining it closely, but it has so often been touched up that not much of the Byzantine original remains. The other object is the *Codex purpureus*. This is a 6th-century illuminated codex of the Gospels of such prodigious rarity that tourists are not usually allowed to see it, but are palmed off with a facsimile copy instead.

"However," said the dean with a sly smile, "since you are English and come from the land of corned beef and macaroni cooked in milk and besides are staying in the house of my brother-in-law, I will make an exception in your case and show you the original."

He went out. A sound of keys grinding in strong-room locks followed and he returned bearing the sacred volume. At his suggestion we touched it with our fingers and kissed it —a Greek custom—and then he opened the cover. We drew in our breath. It was written in silver uncials on smooth leaves of vellum that have been dyed a deep purple with the juice of a shellfish, the murex, and I thought that I had never seen such a superb effect on a page. The illuminations, too, were remarkable. The figure of Christ was stylised in the Byzantine manner, whereas the other figures were painted in the naturalistic Roman way. Some of the illuminations by their deep, flowing colours, very different to the meticulous precision of medieval manuscripts, recalled Blake's illustrations to the *Prophetic Books*. But the dean would not let us look at them in peace. Scratching the figures with a long, rusty pen, he insisted on taking us through the Bible stories they represented. We lost patience and left.

There is a Byzantine church in Rossano roofed over with five small cupolas and lighted with fretted alabaster windows. It has the usual three apses in honour of the three Persons of the Trinity and dates from the 10th century. But it was the situation of the city rather than its monuments that made the charm. It had been built on a hilltop whose sides were cut away in sheer red cliffs, and *belvederes* had been built in a number of places from which one could look at the view. Leaning over the parapet of these, one saw below one a forest of grey olive trees stretching away to the blue sea beyond. The streets were as clean and the houses as white as those of an Andalusian town and like them smelt of olive oil and of the smoke of olive wood.

"I want a car for the whole day tomorrow," I said to the landlord at lunch time. "Can you get me one?"

"Of course," he replied. "Where do you want to go to?"

"To Sybaris."

"Sibari? But there is nothing at all to see there. Nothing but a railway station."

"Very likely. But once upon a time there was a great city."

"Ah, you learned people! What do you want to know so much for? When they tried to teach me history at school I saw that so many things had happened in the world before my time that it would be better for me not to trouble my memory with any of them. Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans, Arabs, Normans, Germans, Spaniards—what can all those people who left their visiting cards in this country mean to me? Here at Rossano we live just as we have always done."

Sybaris indeed—why should anyone in their senses want to visit it? Not a stone remained to show where it had once stood. But all the same its legend fascinated me. Deep under a

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malarial marsh was buried the Greek city that more than five hundred years before Christ had given its name to the life of luxury. A year or two before the war my wife and I had driven down the length of Italy on a pilgrimage to its site. We had got as far as Metapontion, a little to the east, and spent the night in the most filthy dwelling—it was the stationmaster's house—I had ever stayed in. A goat had nibbled our shoes as we lay in bed, a legion of bugs had bitten us, and the frogs in the marshes had kept up a deafening croaking all night. Next morning we had walked in an icy wind over the site of the city where Pythagoras had died and had picked up a silver coin with an ear of wheat on it. There was little wheat there now, for the malaria had made the coast uninhabitable and the only food offered us was a dish of boiled beans. We had eaten them without relish, remembering how Pythagoras had said that a man who would eat beans was capable of eating his grandmother. Then that evening the heavy rains had begun and washed away the road and we had to turn back to Taranto and give up our hope of seeing Sybaris.

THE car came round at nine and we set off. Red cliffs, stony torrents, olive trees with gnarled and twisted branches, as tortured and ascetic looking as the hermits who had once squatted in these wastes. Then pear trees in blossom and large oaks breaking boisterously into leaf. We passed Corigliano, a white town piled up round a ruined castle, and came suddenly on to a broad, treeless plain, sown with wheat. It was the delta of the River Crathis, to-day called the Crati. Bounding it, six or seven miles away, rose a range of snow-covered mountains, leading up to the Monte Pollino. Somewhere out on that plain, deep under the green corn and the mud, lay the city we were looking for.

Sybaris was founded in the year 720 B.C. by Achæan colonists from the gulf of Corinth. The site had been chosen both for its rich, corn-growing land and for the opportunities it offered for trade. The era of exploration and of the search for metals, of which we get a reflection in the Odyssey, was passing into one of commercial and territorial expansion and a new market had been discovered in the powerful confederacy of Etruria, which controlled the greater part of Central Italy and possessed valuable tin and iron mines. But the sea route was closed by the Greek cities of Zancle and Rhegium (to-day called Messina and Reggio) which had just been built on either side of the Straits of Messina. They were members of an armed commercial league which included Chalcis with its bronze foundries, Corinth, and Samos, and had the last link of its chain at Cumæ, just to the north of Naples. Sybaris belonged to a rival league whose chief member was Miletus, and one of the objects of its foundation was, by opening up a road across the toe of Italy, to short-circuit the sea routes by the Straits. The first thing, therefore, that the Sybarites did after taking possession of the Crathis valley was to spread across to the other side and establish a port at Laos on the western coast of Italy. They also founded a string of stations northwards along that coast and a new city at Poseidonia, or, as the Romans called it, Pæstum, to offset Cumæ. Some of the temples they built there are still standing to-day.

Sybaris grew rapidly because it had an unusual sort of constitution which allowed it to admit to citizenship any person of Hellenic speech. It thus became a mixing bowl for the mutually jealous Greek city states, and adventurous men and others fleeing from tyranny flocked to it from all over the Aegean. Besides, it had behind it the naval and economic power of Miletus, which was on its way to becoming the largest and wealthiest community of the Greek world. Miletus stood just outside the coast of Lydia, the gold-bearing state of Asia Minor, whose last king Crœsus was to give his name to all millionaires. It had opened up the Black Sea to commerce, founding many colonies there, and had broken the Phœnician monopoly of trade with Egypt. Now, turning westwards, it came to an arrangement with Corinth which gave it the advantage over Samos in the struggle for the Etruscan market. Before long, therefore, the warehouses of its ally, Sybaris, were overflowing with luxury goods

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of many different kinds. Finely woven woollen materials, painted Ionian and Corinthian earthenware, Oriental jewellery and silver plate, unguents, medicines, spices, glass and carved ivory were towed up the short canal from the sea and unloaded in the city. There were also cargoes of Egyptian cats. The Sybarites, and through them the Etruscans, were the first European peoples to appreciate these animals: the Greeks had preferred ferrets. So greatly did Sybaris prosper by the tolls it exacted from this trade (for it had no merchant fleet of its own), and also by its fields of corn and vines and olives and its forests of timber, that within little over a century of its foundation it had grown, if we may believe the historian, Timæus, to have a population of 300,000 free persons, while the circuit of its city walls, according to Strabo, was more than five miles. Even if we halve the first of these figures, it was still the largest city in Europe.

THE picture we have been given of Sybarite luxury belongs to the 6th century B.C. This was an age of oligarchies and tyrannies in Greece. In Asia Minor the Ionian cities were at the height of their fame and opulence, while in Italy the Etruscans had spread as far south as Naples. Under these favourable circumstances the landowners of Sybaris had acquired enormous wealth. Every Greek city wanted to excel in something and so the Sybarites who, like all the new states in Italy and Sicily, had a touch of megalomania, turned away from those athletic and intellectual pursuits by which prestige was usually won and decided to explore the possibilities of the voluptuous life. In doing this they came under two influences, the Milesian and the Etruscan. Miletus, a city of merchant princes, the pride, as Herodotus called it, of Ionia, went in for a rather melancholy and disillusioned refinement. Its philosophers were materialists who saw human life as a part of Nature's, and since, alone among Greek cities, its traditions went back without interruption to Cretan and Mycenæan times, its women were educated and allowed to mix freely with men. The Etruscans also had a hedonistic attitude to life, but of a coarser and less polished sort. They were great gluttons and drunkards, as their sculptures of fat men reclining on tombstones would suggest. Their sexual habits, if later writers are to be believed, were uninhibited to an astonishing degree while their women had complete liberty to do as they pleased and lay alongside the men at their licentious banquets, waited on by naked youths and girls. The Sybarites learned from both. Although one cannot say that they were the first people to practise luxury, they seem to have been the first to make of it a deliberate way of life.

As we should expect, they gave a lot of attention to dress. Their women wore long, trailing robes of various colours, made of a semi-transparent crinkled linen, often with an embroidered border round the edge and decorated with designs of birds and animals. Over these they wore capes or mantles of fine wool, brightly dyed, while their veils were of a silk made from the filaments of a mollusc, the *pinna marina*. The frescoes on the Etruscan tombs at Tarquinia and in the Metropolitan Museum in New York give some idea of the elegance of those clothes. Then, as to-day, the fashions changed frequently. Invitations to important banquets were issued twelve months in advance so that the women should have time to prepare their dresses, and after the meal there would be mannequin parades to show off the new styles. Some of these dresses must have been very elaborate, for Aristotle speaks of one that was sold for twenty talents, that is about fifteen thousand dollars, although it had no gold or metal thread in it.

The public processions were imposing. On these occasions the cavalry, some five thousand strong and composed of young men from the best families, rode through the city wearing saffron robes over their breast plates. Their horses had been taught to dance to the sound of flute music. Then, when the sacrifices in the temples were over, the feasting began. Perhaps there was nothing that shocked Greek susceptibilities so much as the latitude the Sybarites allowed to their women.

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At the banquets they reclined on couches like the men in the Etruscan fashion in spite of the fact that these generally ended in drunkenness. And they were indulged in other ways. The reason that we do not hear of Sybarite courtesans is apparently that every woman was so proficient in the art of love and so free to give herself to anyone she pleased that there was no need for them. Before coming out, society girls were trained by professional women in the subtleties of love-making and encouraged to practise what they had learned on their boy friends. Yet there were some restrictions. A law was passed forbidding women to be in the streets after dark unless, or so the other malicious Greeks declared, they were intending to commit adultery.

THE Sybarite cuisine was particularly elaborate. The State gave prizes for the best banquets, crowned the cooks who had served them like the winning athletes at Olympia, and protected those who had invented new dishes by giving them a twelve months' patent. Since eels were a great delicacy and it was a principal of their fiscal system to encourage luxuries at the expense of necessities, the eel-catchers were exempted from paying taxes. The most famous of their culinary inventions was a sauce known as *garon*. It was made of mackerel roes and of the intestines of tunny and other fishes, beaten up with the yolk of egg and cooked in brine, and then left to soak for several months in a mixture of wine and oil. This sauce acquired a great reputation in the Greek world and was later taken up by the Romans.

Wonderful tales were told of Sybarite gastronomy. When a certain Smindyrides attended the wedding of Agariste, the daughter of the tyrant of Sicyon—a social occasion so famous in the Greek world that Herodotus gives a couple of pages to it—he arrived in his private fleet with, we are told, a thousand cooks, fishermen, and huntsmen. Knowing what importance a Sybarite attached to comfort, his host had prepared for him a bed made of rose petals. He complained that as one of them had folded in two, he had passed a sleepless night. On a friend of his remarking that he had ruptured himself simply from watching some labourers working in a field, "My dear fellow," he replied, "it gives me a pain in the side even to hear you speak of it." The *mot* of another Sybarite is well known. After dining in the common mess at Sparta he remarked, "Now I know why the Spartans do not fear death."

One would not expect to find many athletes among the Sybarites. In fact, only one victory was recorded to their name at Olympia—in 616 B.C. in the boys' boxing competition. They thought a good deal, however, about health. Thus they installed modern sanitation in their houses and were the first people in Europe to take steam baths. They also invented the chamber pot. Since they believed that noise had a bad effect on the nerves, they forbade trades that required hammering, such as smiths' and carpenters', to be carried on within the walls, and would not allow anyone to keep cocks for fear their crowing might disturb their sleep.

The other Greeks laughed at their fondness for pets. The rich kept hunchbacks and dwarfs like the Spanish kings painted by Velasquez, as well as Maltese lap dogs, Egyptian cats, and apes and monkeys which they imported from Tunisia. They never walked, but took a chariot to go even a few yards down the street. To shield themselves from the sun they covered their streets with awnings and planted shade trees along the highroads. It seems that they were the first people to do this before Napoleon. Their houses were larger than those of the other Greeks and although they tried to give the impression of being idle they saw to it that their estates, on which they chiefly depended for their wealth, should be carefully drained and cultivated by their Italian serfs and dotted with clean and well-designed towns and villages. For this reason they rarely went abroad. They had made life too pleasant for themselves in their own country to wish ever to leave it, and the proudest boast of a Sybarite was that he had grown old leaning over the bridges of his rivers.

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A PEOPLE as comfort-loving as this required a safe world to live in, but that was a thing not granted to anyone in those times. Sybaris had two neighbours whose ambition she feared—Siris, a city as much given to luxury as herself, on the east, and Croton, on the west. With the aid of her ally, Metapontion, she attacked Siris and took it. There was a slaughter in the temple of Athena and the statue of the goddess, it was said, turned away her head. After that only Croton remained.

The Crotoniates were Achæans like the Sybarites and had been settled in the country for almost as long. They were prosperous, possessed a good port, a fair tract of territory, and valuable silver mines. They were not given to the cult of luxurious living, but on the contrary went in for athletics. Their hero was a certain Milo, who had been six times victor in the Olympic wrestling matches and had carried off twenty-five other prizes as well. A very different sort of person to Smindyrides! Yet for all their cult of the body the Crotoniates had not been successful in war. At about the time that the Sybarites were annexing Siris, they had attacked their much smaller neighbour, Locri, which lay a hundred miles away down the coast. Now Locri was a city of a rather peculiar sort. Contrary to Greek notions of propriety, its society had certain mother-right features and sacred prostitution was practised in one of its temples. It was also endowed with a special æsthetic sensibility and in its beautiful terra cotta plaques and in the famous Ludovisi throne, dug up long ago at Rome but recently proved to have come from its temple to Demeter, we get a softness and tenderness that are not quite Greek.

When, therefore, the levies of athletic Croton met the Locrian army, which was only a tenth of its size, at the mouth of the River Sagras, they felt confident of winning. But in the narrow plain between the mountains and the sea they had no room to deploy and were totally defeated. So miraculous seemed the victory that the Locrians gave the credit to the Dioscuri, or Heavenly Twins, who had been seen in the thick of the battle, dressed in purple cloaks and hats and mounted on white horses. Some of the statues in Parian marble which they put up to them may be seen to-day in the Museum at Naples, while an earlier terra cotta figure is at Reggio.

Croton owed its recovery from this defeat to an almost equally miraculous event. Towards 530 B.C. the famous Pythagoras of Samos arrived and settled down there. He was a man in his early fifties who had emigrated to the west to avoid political persecution and he had a moral and religious mission to carry out which, if it were successful, would transform the Greek world.

To understand this we must open a history book and remind ourselves that the second half of the 6th century was an age of rapid social change. In Greece the aristocracies had broken down into tyrannies which would very soon give way to democracies. At the same time the rites and myths of paganism, which drew their strength from the collective feelings of small communities, were ceasing to satisfy. The individual, with his desire for personal salvation, was beginning to emerge. In India, where there was an old tradition of yogi asceticism, a man called Gautama was preaching an escape from the stream of becoming and echoes of his teaching, or that of his predecessors, would seem to have been carried, one does not know how, to the west. At all events a new religious movement suddenly made its appearance at this time in Greece. It went by the name of Orphism, after the legendary Thracian bard who was thought to have first introduced it, and it aimed at preparing men for a state of future happiness by certain rites of purification. The mysteries of Eleusis in Attica, which had begun as an agricultural ritual for promoting the sprouting of the corn, were adapted to secure the re-birth of the soul after death and were one of the chief centres of the cult. The worship of Dionysus and the torchlight orgies which offered temporary union with the god, were associated with it.

Pythagoras appeared at Croton as a religious teacher who preached a calmer and more Apollonian form of Orphism. The soul, he believed, was reincarnated according to its

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deserts in either a higher or a lower form of existence, and he was said to have been able to remember previous lives when he had been a bird, a fish, and a butterfly. It was this that made vegetarianism so necessary; otherwise in eating a mutton chop one might inadvertently be devouring one's great aunt. But if he preserved certain primitive ways of thinking, he had also an intuition of the nature of the world of an extremely original kind. He was the founder of mathematics and particularly of that branch of it which investigates the properties of numbers. His discoveries in this field suggested a much more comprehensive view. Since form rather than substance seemed to him to give the key to reality, he decided that numbers were the fundamental things in the universe, the immaterial and changeless atoms of which everything is made, and he illustrated this by his demonstration of the numerical ratios of the intervals in the musical scale. This seemed to show that the sounds with which his forerunner Orpheus had charmed the animals were a sort of audible mathematics and an intimation of the underlying order in Nature.

Pythagoras' opinion that numbers are at the root of everything has had a long history. Plato took his theory of ideas from it, and modern physics has in a certain sense adopted it too. His experiment with a lyre string was the first scientific experiment. But he had a very different view of the purpose of acquiring knowledge from that of the man of science to-day. Philosophy—he was the first person to use the word—was according to him a great deal more than a form of curiosity: by the revelation it offered of the true nature of the universe it was a purification and an escape from the wheel of re-birth. That is to say, the contemplation of mathematical and scientific truth provided the same sort of assurance that the contemplation of God does to the Christian mystic.

PYTHAGORAS founded at Croton an order or brotherhood for the propagation of his ideas. It was organised like freemasonry in secret lodges in which the beginner was led on by ascetic exercises and the observation of special taboos to the philosophers' vision, which purged the soul of mundane things. From the first this new order proved very popular and Milo, the great athlete and hero of his countrymen, was among those who joined. Soon it was playing a leading part in politics and drawing up a new constitution for the city by which puritanism and holiness became the order of the day. It was about this time that a quarrel broke out between Sybaris and Croton. The Sybarites, who had just exchanged their oligarchy for a popular tyranny, expelled six hundred of their wealthier citizens and the Crotoniates, acting on the advice of Pythagoras, who disliked what we would to-day call Peronism and also no doubt such unpuritanical cities as Sybaris, gave them shelter. By the custom of the times this was a hostile act, and the Sybarites reacted to it by rioting and murdering the Crotoniate ambassadors. The answer to this deed of impiety was war.

The two armies—it was the year 510 B.C.—met on the plain just below Rossano. The Sybarites had the advantage of numbers, but the men of Croton were filled with religious enthusiasm. Milo, got up in a lion skin and club in imitation of Hercules, strode in front as their general. Then the Sybarite cavalry advanced. But the Crotoniates, as Aristotle tells us, had thought of a trick for dealing with them: as they were preparing to charge, Milo gave the sign to his flute players to strike up a tune and their horses began to dance. Before long the whole Sybarite army was in flight and the Crotoniates were pouring over the bridges into the city. There was a slaughter in the temple of Hera and, as had happened at Siris, the goddess turned away her face. As usual the terms of capitulation were severe. The inhabitants were expelled and the site of the city was solemnly cursed. Then a dam was built and the river Crathis was turned over it. Sybaris vanished for ever under the water and the mud. This was the year in which the Tarquins were expelled from Rome and the Pisistrids from Athens, and Sybaris, linked with them by the propaganda of the Pythagoreans, became in Greek

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legend the type of the ungodly city, destroyed for its sins like Sodom and Gomorrah.

There was a sequel. A quarrel broke out at Croton over the distribution of the conquered lands and Pythagoras was driven out. He settled at Metapontion, a little way to the east, where he died a few years later, starved to death, it is said, in the temple of the Muses. Fifty years after this the Pythagoreans who still remained at Croton were burned to death in Milo's house and a persecution began against them all over Italy. So, though some of their ideas were taken up by Socrates, their movement had failed. Had it succeeded we must suppose that the history of the world would have been very different, for it would have re-shaped the chaotic religious myths and practices of the Greeks into a coherent system of belief served by an organised priesthood and offering a definite way of salvation. Christianity would have found the vacuum filled and the religion of the West to-day would have been something not unlike Buddhism but attaching great importance to the scientific view of the world.

THE car we were driving in stopped at the bridge over the Crathis and we got out. A swift, yellow, turbulent stream flowed below. It took its name from a shepherd who had sexual union with a goat. The jealous he-goat had killed him in his sleep and the other shepherds had called the river that flowed by the place after him. In spite of these Arcadian associations it was a dangerous river that whipped about its valley like a snake, overflowed its banks every year, and carried trees and fields and crops away to the sea. On the coins of Sybaris it was represented as a bull, pawing the ground. A short distance below the bridge it was joined by another considerable stream, the River Sybaris, to-day the Coscile, but originally these had flowed separately into the sea and the city had stood between them. The old bed of the Crathis, presumably the same as that which the men of Croton had diverted, could be seen a little to the right. Somewhere not far away, perhaps immediately under our feet, lay the luxurious city, with its treasures of archaic temples and sculpture, awaiting the spade and the motor pump of the excavator.

There remained, however, another historical sensation to be captured. Sixty-seven years after the destruction of Sybaris a Pan-Hellenic colony was founded a mile or two away on a platform of higher ground. This was Thurii. It was laid out on a rectangular plan by the architect of the Piræus; and the bow and arrows of Philoctetes, the companion of Hercules and hero of the Trojan War, whom the Sybarites claimed to have been the first coloniser of their territory, were taken from their hiding places and installed in one of its temples. This was the man with the wound and the bow in whom Edmund Wilson has seen the symbol of the creative artist. But the real claim of Thurii to our interest was that Herodotus had taken part in its foundation and written the greater part of his history there. Its exact site was not known, for none of its buildings had survived the depredations of the monks and the Saracens, but the necropolis, in which the great historian was buried, had been discovered and we set off to find it. After some search we came on the place. Asphodels and wild fennel grew shoulder high over it. Dotted about were oaks and silver-grey olive trees. Here and there a group of white cattle, descendants of the famous herds of the Sybarites, were standing moodily around. And beyond lay a view. In a sudden expansion of the air the green plain stretched away to the line of trees that marked the river bank and on from that to the snow-covered mountains. An occasional white farmhouse, a row of scarlet-skirted women hoeing were the only intermediate objects to catch the eye. The Greeks always chose beautiful sites for their cities, but the Sybarites, I said to myself, had chosen the most beautiful of all.

But what of the malaria? The curse that has hung over this fertile valley for seventeen hundred years has been completely removed since the war with American help. The old Byzantine towns on the hilltops are moving down to the plain and new settlements are springing up there. Yet this is having

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disastrous effects. Malaria even in a mild form reduces fertility and increases infant mortality and since the mosquitoes have gone the population has been breeding like rabbits. In fifty years' time the whole of this beautiful land will be a slum like the Ganges valley.

"There is no sense in the modern world," said a landowner I met that evening at the café. "They prevent the children who had much better die from dying and then they invent these new bombs to kill everyone. That's what they call civilisation."

Olympics

(for Charles Tomlinson)

Asleep among heedless weeds I
Awake beside a bayonet.
Grass, cold crowner of the dead,
Bless the roots of memory.

Bells tear the steeple from the church
And die in overtones of metal.
Brass relates the reverent mail
Of knights who felled a sepulchre.

Death has his rivalries, like life,
But death-in-life is merely
Envious of death and life.
Gods vie immortally.

The sculptor, hewn from rock,
Scales the abyss of doubt and
Hackles raised, crows like a cock
Preening his bloody spurs.

On lawns of ice the architect
Of passion builds pavilions
Glittering with lion eyes
And the spectrum of spring suns.

Tomorrow will kindle a torch
In the athlete's harvest hand
And the poised javelin
Will strike root in friendly land.

Ronald Bottrall

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THIS SCEPTER'D ISLE

THIS SEAT OF MARS

THIS OTHER EDEN

Kenneth Tynan: LETTER TO A YOUNG MAN

A FEW months ago I tried to cram most of what I felt about this country into a long ironic letter written to a young man, the son of a friend of mine, who was coming to the end of his three years at Oxford, where he read English.

DEAR JOHN,

As one who has crossed the armed frontier that separates the university from real life, I feel a humane desire, now that you are on the eve of finals, to unload on you a little kindly advice. I do so because you are an arts student, and hence likely to be led into errors that might delay, perhaps indefinitely, your entry into the world of reality and success.

To begin with, it is important that you should realise your status. You are among the sixty per cent of undergraduates who are receiving financial aid from the state, and your position as such was defined, fearlessly and without equivocation, by Somerset Maugham in his Christmas 1955 message to the *Sunday Times*. "They are scum," he said: and since Mr. Maugham rarely thinks anything controversial or uncertain of wide acceptance, I think you should heed his opinion. It is shared, I assure you, by many who lack his gift for plain speaking. I myself think that "scum" is putting it a bit harshly, but you know how squeamish a thinker I am.

Before going on, I must admit to a deficiency. I know next to nothing about your generation at the university. Eight years have passed since I left Oxford, and we were pirates then, at least my friends were: an

These two articles by Kenneth Tynan and John Osborne are excerpted from much longer essays which will appear in a symposium, Declaration, *to be published by MacGibbon and Kee on October 14th. This symposium, edited by Tom Maschler, also contains contributions by Lindsay Anderson, Doris Lessing, Bill Hopkins, John Wain, Stuart Holroyd, and Colin Wilson. Most of these writers will be recognised as those conventionally bundled together as Angry Young Men. Mr. Maschler, however, in his introduction, stresses that "they do* not *belong to a united movement." In our next issue we shall present a section of Lindsay Anderson's essay which differs in many respects from the points of view expressed by other contributors to the volume.*

Any reader moved by these articles to write an angry letter to the editors is requested to make it an angry short letter, please—not more than 500 words. The same applies to benevolent communications.—Editors.

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immodest band of unregenerate phonies all of whom, apart from myself, were ex-servicemen. We were mortal invalids and congenital nail-biters, and our figurehead was a stately necrophile who wrote in suave Trollopian periods about calamity and despair. One of his stories, I wince to remember, concerned a timorous hermit who awoke one day to find himself nailed inside a coffin that was being wheeled into a crematorium. Having passed through the flames, he emerged into a grey world of unimaginable horror, peopled with shambling zombies, which he took to be hell until a passing zombie told him it was Golders Green. From time to time we would beg our friend to cheer his fiction up, and one day he gave in: from now on, he said, the corpses would *dance*. That was the kind of person we were. All I can say for us is that, in an anarchic way and if you'll pardon the expression, we were democrats, though I doubt if many of us even then would have come out and shouted about it. The odd thing is that the 1945–48 generation did not mature at all badly. It is prominent in the Commons; it wrote a musical play that has been a hit on both sides of the Atlantic; it has influenced both kinds of television; it has made a telling mark in films, and it is said to have revivified the English novel. It even ran the first four-minute mile. And I cannot ignore its sluggards, many of whom have dropped some shapely pebbles into the puddles of Fleet Street.

Your case, of course, is different. Conditions applied in 1945 that cannot be repeated now. V-J day had just happened, and the pre-war order had not yet reasserted itself. Physically, we were cramped by rationing, but spiritually we had a lot of elbow-room. Authority was too busy to give us its full attention, and Class had not yet recovered (as, by God, it since has) from the dreadful wounds dealt it by the war. We were all profiting from a unique and transient phenomenon that swept across England in 1945. You will not remember it, but at the time we called it the Swing to the Left. (The Left used to be the opposite of the Right.) Now, as you know, moderation is the thing, and the '45–'50 period is regarded as the five lost years of middle-class masochism.

Several quite influential people told me in 1945 that if we had not gone to war against the wrong country the election results would have been much more sensible. This feeling has gained ground since then, especially inside the Establishment, and you must take care to study it. One of your soundest guides will be Evelyn Waugh, whom you need not tip. Consult and memorise the passage in his novel *Officers and Gentlemen* in which the hero, an officer and gentleman named Guy Crouchback, looks back longingly on the day when the Russo-German pact was signed and "the Enemy was plain in view." Now, alas, Hitler has invaded Russia, and Guy realises, beyond all doubt, that Britain has been "led blundering into dishonour." Let me elucidate that last phrase. The dishonour to which it refers is that of allying ourselves with Russia instead of Germany. Get that quite clear. Guy Crouchback's attitude is all part of the middle-aged Swing to the Right, and it is something you will have to reckon with. You may leap on to the pendulum; you may duck; or you may hold your ground, in which case you will probably be caught a blinding blow behind the ear. If you risk that fate, my advice will have been in vain.

It is all a matter of attitudes. Your attitude towards your native land, for example, should be governed by a gracious old concept, redolent of all that was best in medievalism. Recently refurbished by Mr. Waugh, it is called the concept of precedence. "There is a single line," he has written, "extending from Windsor to Wormwood Scrubs of individuals all justly and precisely graded." Do not overlook the assumption behind the word "justly." Italicise it in your mind. It will help you to understand not only the meaning of justice but also the idea of a hierarchy as something fixed by God and not to be tampered with by you. You, as a writer,

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are a man in rebellion against an unchangeable order; you must never think of yourself as an organic part of a developing social entity.

Apropos, I would recall to your mind a remark made two years ago by Anthony Nutting, when Krushchev and Bulganin were in India. His exact words have by now perished in a pulp-dump, or wherever old newspapers go for mashing, but the image he used was unforgettable. B. and K., he said, having been turned down at the front door, had gone round to the back. India, that is to say, was the tradesmen's entrance. I am not sure where the Jews stand in the Great Chain of Being; so many of them are so obstinately classless; but Windsor, of course, will stand always where it stands today, a permanent bulwark to protect the people against the depredations of feudalism.

Before you accept Lord Beaverbrook's offer, I think you should consider what it means to have a job on the *Daily Express*. You will have to learn how to write like a popular, excitable, middle-aged woman, who is easily flustered and something of a tease. You will quickly master the gasping, exclamatory style; but I bid you remember that this is the sister-organ of the *Sunday Express,* which told Guy Burgess that it "would greatly appreciate" a few words from his pen, and then printed them alongside an editorial dismissing them as "the propaganda of a pervert." On the whole, I think you would be well advised to turn critic as soon as possible. Less schizophrenia is involved, and it is anyway safer to be among the watchers than among the watched. If, as will often happen, you dislike a book, play, or film without knowing quite why, your best course is to accuse it of "vulgarity" or "bad taste." These are the two great meaningless indispensables of English criticism. I have known writers who died penniless but happy in the knowledge that they had never incurred them. Tell a man that he thinks loosely or writes irresponsibly, and you touch him not at all. Tell him that he writes badly, and he will scarcely know what you mean. But tell him that he is vulgar, tell him that he is tasteless, and you do more than wound him: you brand him an outcast for life.

We must now consider what your attitude towards foreigners should be. France is easy. Nancy Mitford answers the question, with her jubilant prostration at the feet of the French aristocracy. Russia is easier still: who could entertain anything but a sorrowing contempt for a country that has not only abolished nostalgia but made it impossible for money to breed? Towards America a little more ambivalence is customary. The thing to cling to is that Americans actively enjoy being insulted, and the old insults are still the best—"vulgar" and "tasteless." Americans abroad must always be approached with these two words, plus a faintly contemptuous smile, playing about one's lips. "Vulgar," for instance, is the word for the remark made by the American humorist H. Allen Smith on seeing the playing-fields of Eton. "Just to think!" he said, "Here is where the battle of Yorktown was lost!"

Wisely ordained currency regulations will of course hinder you from seeing much of the Americans at home; but it is a fair inference that they are much the same, if not worse. You should make a point of cultivating a lofty, frozen sneer for those occasions when Hollywood crops up in conversation. How typical is the gaudy brashness (brash is a keyword) of so-called "musicals" such as *On the Town!* And how pathetically morbid the passion for self-exposure that turns out films like *On the Waterfront* and *Rebel Without a Cause*! Be passionately grateful that our film industry has escaped contamination. British movies never wallow in the sewers of realism, nor do they abuse their power over simple people's minds: not from them will you hear a word of serious criticism of the police, the civil service, the government, the armed forces, or the educational system. We at least draw the line somewhere; you might even say, as a joke, that we draw it everywhere. And if Hollywood is a booby-trap, Broadway is nothing but a glossy receptacle for the outpourings of people like

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Clifford Odets, Lillian Hellman, Eugene O'Neill, Arthur Miller, and Tennessee Williams.

Should you write a novel, do not omit to put an American into it. And when you do so, let the silver-tongued imps of satire grace your pen. Give him a name like Scab Dunz or Bum Schlum. (I could never have invented these: they spray from Mr. Waugh's inimitable imagination.) The name of Graham Greene's "Quiet American" is Pyle, which paves the way for a killing little joke when the American asks the narrator why he does not address him by his Christian name. "I'd rather not," says the narrator: "Pyle has got—associations." Pyle is more than vulgar and tasteless: he is crew-cut and teetotal, and he blunders into violence before you can say *naïf*. He is ignorant of everything except air-conditioning, deodorants, internationalism, and the other evils with which his country has burdened us. I could explode with rage when I hear people saying that *The Quiet American* is not a religious novel. It is intensely religious. It is the considered work of a man for whom the Devil has acquired a face—the face of America—and I am lost in admiration for the punctilio and energy with which the author, doing what he must, smashes it to pulp.

Here I must issue a warning. On no account read what are known as "the better American magazines." They will only fuzz your prejudices. They are all named after places, which stamps them provincial from the outset—*The Hudson Review*, *The Kenyon Review*, *The New Yorker*, and so forth. All you will find in them is a bright, blind devotion to accuracy, directness, and unwounding wit. Their writers do not seem to be aware that prose is different in kind from conversation: the ghastly *ease* of their style proclaims their inability to comprehend the arts of well-bred circumlocution. *The New Yorker* in particular declines to be taught that good prose should be pitched at least an octave above reality. Why, in a recent issue it printed a story by somebody called J. D. Salinger, which dealt—on shiny paper among advertisements for cars and refrigerators—with the problem of perfect Christian love. There's vulgarity for you! And not one sentence that the admirers of Charles Morgan would recognise as literature.

IF YOU feel unable to sympathise with any of these *idées reçues*, there is one other course open to you. I hesitate to mention it, for it is the most perilous of all. You *might* go out and discover what the rest of your generation is really like, and act on what you discover. It will astound and alarm you. Go first of all to the jazz clubs: we might even, if you want to risk it, make a rendezvous at one of them. You will first be surprised by the absence of the orgiastic frenzy that you have been schooled to expect. You will notice that the dancers, quickly though they move, make contact only at the finger-tips. Sex comes later. Each deadpan partner stares, twirling, into the blue haze of smoke. Yet the whole place is implicitly alive. You will hear that London is rapidly becoming the jazz centre of Europe; that this is the only art in which our prestige is growing. And if you talk to the cats, you will find in them these qualities: an instinctive Leftism, an undemonstrative sympathy with anarchy, a dislike of classy politicians, a vivid vernacular made up of Hollywood, space fiction, and local dialect, a polite interest in drugs, a good deal of shared promiscuous pleasure, and almost no drunkenness. These young people cannot look at Macmillan's face without laughing, and they cannot work up much interest in our inalienable right to flog Cypriot schoolboys; though I feel they might be rather nettled if Liechtenstein were a Czarist colony and Russia sent over a *gauleiter* to enforce its loyalty. They are bright, unaggressive, and authentically tolerant. Few of them would be capable of doing anything with a razor except shaving with it. You could never make a lynch-mob out of them, because the art they live for was invented by Negroes.

What they (and you, and I) lack is a rallying-point, social and political. They are classless; or, rather, they are drawn from

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every class except the top one. They need an organ, a platform to articulate their impatience with convention, with "good taste," with "British prestige," with the use of "emotional" as a dirty word. You might give them their rallying-point, if you do not mind uphill battles. But I am forgetting. Having just been at a university, you will have had your taste for freedom soured by reading Arthur Koestler, the most brilliant and persuasive of the defeatists. You will have been overwhelmed by his skill in analogy, by his trick of equating individual behaviour with group behaviour; you will have learned that you have a love-hate relationship with America, that the French are suffering from "collective amnesia" about the German occupation, that your war-time admiration of Sir Winston's cigar was fetish-worship, that your Leftish sympathies are "derived from adolescent revolt against the parents." You may have concluded that the desire to iron out social inequalities is in itself a neurosis; and that the urge towards freedom is nothing but a birth-trauma. The time to read Koestler is after you have been defeated, not before. To read him before is to guarantee failure. You will not inspire my generation, or yours, by crying, with him, that "we can at best hope for a reprieve." The hell with that. We will not settle for life imprisonment: we want a free pardon.

And we want it not just for ourselves, or our economic block, or our allies, but for our world. Do I speak for you when I ask for a society where people care more for what you have learned than for where you learned it; where people who think and people who work can share common assumptions and discuss them in the same idiom; where art connects itself instead of separating people; where people feel, as in that new Salinger story, that every fat woman on earth is Jesus Christ; and where those who carry the torch of freedom are never asked to run with it into the ammunition dump? Do you want these things?

Perhaps you don't. In which case I must sign myself

Your implacable enemy,
K. T.

I never posted the letter, because I heard that the boy had just signed a long-term contract with an advertising agency. There seemed no point in depressing him.

John Osborne: AND THEY CALL IT CRICKET

I HAVE dreaded writing this piece. If I were ever capable of doing it, I am not capable of doing it now. Months ago some kind of weakness or vanity made me agree to contribute to this book, but I have procrastinated to the point of downright bad manners until I am now the only writer in this symposium who has not delivered his copy. They are all—apparently—waiting for me. I do not relish having to address myself to what is almost certain to be a self-conscious literary mob, people who write sneering, parochial stuff in the weekend reviews. I can't solve anybody else's problems, least of all these creatures', collecting their literary cocoa tin lids every week. The people I should like to contact—if I knew how—aren't likely to be reading this book anyway. If they have ever heard of me, it is only as a rather odd-looking "angry young man."

I want to make people feel, to give them lessons in feeling. They can think afterwards.

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In some countries this could be a dangerous approach, but there seems little danger of people feeling too much—at least not in England as I am writing now. I am an artist—whether or not I am a good one is beside the point. For the first time in my life I have a chance to get on with my job, and that is what I intend to do. I shall do it in the theatre and, possibly, in films. I shall not try and hand out my gospel version of the Labour Party's next manifesto to prop up any journalist who wants a bit of easy copy or to give some reviewer another smart clue for his weekly written-up crossword game. I shall simply fling down a few statements—you can take your pick. They will be what are often called "sweeping statements," but I believe we are living at a time when a few "sweeping statements" may be valuable. It is too late for caution.

As I sit and write this, I can look back on a big week for the liars of Britain. It is only a few days since the Christmas Island explosion. And the cheap-jacks of Fleet Street have surpassed themselves in their efforts to make the most debased criminal swindle in British history look like a great victory for common sense. "It's our H-Bomb!" yelled the *Daily Express* and went on to explain "How we fooled the Japs." The Government, it was pointed out quite blandly, had deliberately misled everyone about the timing of the explosion so that the growing protests of the whole world were neatly dodged before they became unanswerable. At the bottom of this front page of bannered indecency was a column which was actually headed "Six Hit for a Man Named Washbrook"—the man named Washbrook being a cousin of a well-known cricketer. The copywriters even managed to make it sound like cricket. As the *Daily Mail* put it, that was that. "The argument about whether or not Britain should explode her H-Bomb is ended. It has vanished in a mushroom over the Central Pacific." The following day, it printed a chatty piece about the wives of men who had made that mushroom. "The H-Bomb Wives" it called them. There were photographs of them—Ordinary British Housewives. One of them was shown holding her baby. No one knows at this time whether one day some Japanese housewife may hold up a baby that is not quite so well-formed or healthy because of a few British husbands and their game of nuclear cricket. . . .

I CAN'T go on laughing at the idiocies of the people who rule our lives. We have been laughing at their gay little madnesses, my dear, at their point-to-points, at the postural slump of the well-off and mentally under-privileged, at their stooping shoulders and strained accents, at their waffling cant, for too long. They are no longer funny, because they are not merely dangerous, they are murderous. I don't think I want to make people laugh at them any more, because they are stupid, insensitive, unimaginative beyond hope, uncreative and murderous. I, too, have done nothing. I was furious with unbelief, but I went on going to work, answering my correspondence and talking to my friends. I behaved like any other "intellectual" of my generation. We sat at home, well-fed, with our reputations and our bank-accounts intact, and left it to some hard-up little Unitarian who was over sixty to hitch-hike all the way, making the only gesture on his own. Nobody laughed at us, we made quite sure of that. "H-Bomb Harold" the brave lads of Fleet Street called him. No doubt he was a crank, or he may not have been very smart or intelligent, but he was the only one of us who had the decency or the courage to leave his wife and children, take his savings out of the bank and make his comical little protest that was certain to fail. The liars in Westminster saw to that, the liars in Fleet Street saw to it. We "intellectuals" saw to it, with our "campaigns" and our signatures. During the Suez Crisis I had collected signatures to a letter to *The Times*! That was the limit of my imagination then. True, it was a very militant letter, possibly seditious even, which may have been the reason why it was not published. This time I didn't even send a letter to *The Times*. A writer can demon-

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strate feeling. It takes an extraordinary human being to demonstrate action as well. Most weeks my own courage allowance doesn't last beyond Monday lunchtime.

Nigel Dennis sent this sort of national swill through the roof in *Cards of Identity*. Admittedly, he hadn't thrown in an H-Bomb as well, but hardly anybody understood the significance of the point he was making. Or if they did, they thought it was amusingly impious but irrelevant and bumbled out the usual stock words like "construction"; and ignored the fact that this play made more serious comments on our society—and made them with wit—than any English play that has appeared for years. Yet, *The Chalk Garden,* that doddering apotheosis of the English theatrical decadence of the last thirty years, had a few weeks before actually received serious critical attention. But then, having endowed a more or less permanent Old Ladies' Home in the Haymarket, the London critics showed that most members of their own particularly peculiar Identity Club found themselves more in touch with the leader writer of the *Daily Mail* than with Mr. Dennis.

I have called royalty religion the "national swill" because it is poisonous, what an old vegetarian I used to know would call "foodless food," or, as Orwell might have put it, the leader-writers and the bribed gossipmongers have only to rattle their sticks in the royalty bucket for most of their readers to put their heads down in this trough of Queen-worship, their tails turned against the world. It just doesn't seem so funny any more.

WHEN my play *The Entertainer* was produced, it was complained that one of the characters was "vaguely anti-queen." Now, if this character was vague in the way she expressed herself, it was because the existence of the Lord Chamberlain's office compelled it. I should have been delighted if she could have been more explicit, although, in this case, I was anxious that this particular point should not be made too literally. The bigger point that this character was trying to make was something like: "What kind of symbols do we live by? *Are* they truthful and worthwhile?" But in expressing herself in anti-queen terms, which was a relevant and colourful image—or so I thought—I believe she was asking an important question. I still believe it to be an important question....

My objection to the royal symbol is that it is dead; it is the gold filling in a mouthful of decay. While the cross symbol represented *values,* the crown simply represents a *substitute* for values. When the Roman crowds gather outside St. Peter's, they are taking part in a moral *system,* however detestable it may be. When the mobs rush forward in the Mall they are taking part in the last circus of a civilisation that has lost faith in itself, and sold itself for a splendid triviality, for the "beauty of the ceremonial" and the "essential spirituality of the rite." We may not create any beauty or exercise much spirituality, but by God! we've got the finest ceremonial and rites in the world! Even the Americans haven't got that.

Ever since a generation thrilled to an announcer intoning the lines about its king's life moving peacefully to its close, the BBC has produced a staff of highly-trained palace lackeys with graveyard voices, and a ponderous language stuffed with Shakespearian and semi-Biblical echoes. It is all as nourishing and useful as wax fruit under a glass case. But to a nation that finds her most significant myths in the idiot heroes of *Reach for the Sky* and *Battle of the River Plate* and longs for aggrandisement but cannot afford a new set of teeth or a breast plate that will save her from humiliation, it is about the one wholly satisfying thing left.

Because royalty is deprived of active political power, and therefore of the necessity to make moral, or any other, decisions, it is presented with a staggering power that gives it a greater grip on the public imagination than any other single institution. Whilst commanding a unique position, it is protected from ever having to solve a problem or make a choice. It is not merely above

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criticism, it is above the necessity of having to justify its existence. It is unhealthy because it encourages a peculiarly sloppy-cynical attitude to politics.

Nobody can seriously pretend that the royal round of gracious boredom, the protocol of ancient fatuity, is politically useful or morally stimulating: the state visits to countries like France and Portugal which successfully fulfil the monarchy function of disguising important political issues—such as the barbarity of the French Government's policy in Algeria, and the openly anti-democratic constitution of Portugal—in a sludge of generalised patriotic feelings. As for the ship launchings, the visits to "establishments," the polo games, the night-clubs with well-bred nobodies, the T.V. appearances, the endless concentration at the racecourse, the Christmas Day set-cant: are these the crowning interests of a rich, healthy culture? Is no one aghast at the thought of a lifetime of reading about the first day at prep-school, the measles, the first dance, the wedding, and finally the beauty of *the* ceremonial?

It bores me, it distresses me that there should be so many empty minds, so many empty lives in Britain to sustain this fatuous industry; that no one should have had the wit to laugh it into extinction, or the honesty to resist it. I don't believe that there can be one intellectual in the Labour Party who doesn't find it hilarious or contemptible. Naturally they would never dream of losing all those votes by saying so, but as long as they encourage people to revel in the political and literal horseplay of a meaningless symbol, they need not expect the masses to start discovering meanings in a serious political idea like socialism. A socialist party that is not republican is not crediting its potential followers with reason or intelligence. By suggesting to a man that fatuity, as long as it is hallowed by tradition, is acceptable and admirable, you cannot expect him to treat a complex social concept with any seriousness. He is not conditioned to seriousness but to totem worship. Whilst a ridiculous anachronism is reverenced as a serious institution the road to socialism will be bedevilled by regard for implicit ruling-class ideals like "restraint," "good taste," "healthy caution," and so on.

It is not easy for ordinary people to liberate themselves from these ideals. They are not encouraged to. When a writer like myself tries to take a tilt at them, he is invariably misunderstood because he is interpreted almost entirely by people sodden in the culture-mores of Oxford and Cambridge, whose knowledge of working-class or sub-middle-class life is confined to second-hand observation, "social studies," and all the microscope-peering and equations that go with them.

One of the difficulties in the way of trying to establish a "working" culture is the stupidity of most critics, who misinterpret one's intentions, partly from insensibility, but also from simple, unacknowledged ignorance. However, it is too much to expect any of them to get up and admit that they have never lived in a street where the lavatories are all "outside." Or even spoken for half an hour to anyone who has. Naturally, no writer can be expected to have "experienced" all the things he reads and watches, any more than an actor can have experienced all his rôles. Most of the time they must rely on an imaginative intuition. But while this quality remains so rare a little quiet personal surveying in the large light hours before the curtain rises would do no harm. An actor successfully cast as a dock worker need not necessarily have done a day's physical work in his life. At the same time, if he were reasonably conscientious, he would certainly get down to some hard, on-the-spot observing, "getting the feel of it." All of this might be pretty superficial, but it would at least be an attempt at understanding.

Most good actors have the humility to admit when they are floundering in the dark. There are few critics who would not be better for the same dose of honesty in their morning tea. But then you can't be expected to know much about art if most of your time

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has been spent in assessing art that is scarcely on speaking terms with the facts of life as known and felt by the great mass of people in Britain today. True, there have been detectable signs of a willingness to learn, and pious expressions about "real people and real emotions" have been uttered in all kinds of unlikely quarters. So much so, that when *The Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* was presented in London, there was a stampede of middle-class converts wanting to baptise themselves in the sweat of the common man. People who would be simply incapable of communicating successfully—or wanting to —for ten minutes with a road sweeper in Nottingham or a bus conductor in Bristol, assured us that here was "the authentic quality and feel" of the kind of people who had never possessed a cheque book or a store account. The play was excitingly conceived but its execution did not bring to mind Tennessee Williams so much as the authors of *Sailor Beware. Death of a Salesman* is not a play about commercial travellers but this seemed to me to be a play about cane-cutters, although I am prepared to believe that its impact would have been greater if it had been more than indifferently performed.

It is an inescapable fact that when the middle classes discuss experience that is not dominated by their own emotional values, they hedge and bluster with all they've got. A few weeks ago, a reviewer wrote: "One is compelled to believe that if they [the characters] have indeed been drawn from life, Mr. Osborne has set them down with shamelessly pointed accuracy." This, at least, is refreshingly honest. There is no pretence at being capable of judging whether the characters have been indeed drawn from life —just a shrug at shamelessly pointed accuracy. The boys in the orchestra at the Royal Court Theatre were capable of judging, and they did: *"We've been through it and we know what it is like."* This is what audiences have muttered beneath their heartbeat as they have watched Oedipus or Lear or Willie Loman. "It's still a bitter truth of life," says the same writer, "that the most wretched human beings become bores when they start moaning—even the sick, the aged and afflicted." This sentence sums up fairly neatly a prevalent class attitude to the pain and struggle of other people. I do not accept it for one moment. It is true that the middle classes do not talk about their private troubles. But like working people they do moan a great deal about the way they think they are being cheated out of their inheritance, submerged by taxes and unfair checks on their "incentive"—in other words they are not allowed to make enough money to buy themselves their traditional privileges—the education that will assure them of the best places in the sun. But, on the whole, they scrupulously avoid discussing their personal problems. Even with their friends.

I REMEMBER a very charming, middle-aged lady almost in tears as she told me that because of the Labour Government she was now forced to live on forty pounds a week. To her, it was a real disturbing problem, and she almost lost her temper because I was bad-mannered enough to let her see that I found it comic. Social injustice that spelled out £2000 a year didn't look like any problem to me. I pointed out that my mother and I had lived on 22s. 6d. a week at one time. But she looked at me as if I had opened my mouth and nothing had happened. At this period in my life, this kind of response had not become an occupational normality for me, and I was quite baffled. No doubt, she regarded my irrelevance about how people lived on 22s. 6d. as a "shamelessly pointed accuracy."

I should have known better, for I had always been made acutely aware of this class stonewall in my own family. My mother's parents were publicans—to be accurate, they managed a succession of pubs in London—until my grandfather "lost it all." My mother has worked behind the bar most of her life. She still does because she likes to "be with other people." Her own mother, who is now eighty-four, retired a few years ago on a small pension from Woolworths. (If I were to put a detail like that into a play, some

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bright social observer would be certain to wave me aside—"one of its strange weaknesses is the apparent wrongness of its sociological facts." For example, one often found oneself wondering if the old woman wasn't merely an intellectual idea sketchily worked out rather than *felt*—"that pension, surely we all know....") She is a tough, sly old Cockney, with a harsh, often cruel wit, who knows how to beat the bailiffs and the moneylenders which my grandfather managed to bring on to her. Almost every working day of her life, she has got up at five o'clock to go out to work, to walk down what has always seemed to me to be the most hideous and coldest street in London. Sometimes when I have walked with her, all young bones and shiver, she has grinned at me, her face blue with what I thought was cold. "I never mind the cold—I like the wind in my face." She'd put her head down, hold on to her hat and *push*.

The whole family pushed, and whenever they got together for some celebration, there would be plenty to drink, however hard things were. That alone is something middle-class people find difficult to understand or forgive. As a small boy I would be given "a little drop of port," and sit apprehensively always, while my grandfather told me about *The Bells* and bawled bits of the Bible at me. He was the only man I had met until I was in my late teens who used a cigarette holder. He was stylish and impressive in the way he could roll out names—Sir Edward Carson, the Prince of Wales, Lord Rosebery, the Lord Chief Justice, the Aga Khan ("Mum always likes me to put a shilling on the black man's horses," my mother would say). Lord Beaverbrook was a particular favourite because he had seen him once, emerging from his Rolls Royce. "One of the finest men in England today!" He seemed to know everything about him. "When I was with Beaverbrook during that time...." He had worked as a canvasser in the north of England for the *Daily Express*. I would sit flushed with port and embarrassment while he told me that he would live to see the day when I would be Prime Minister of England.

During all this, the rest of the family would be yelling news to each other. A lot of it would be about some illness or other. My grandmother would come in and out of the kitchen, usually picking the wrong moments to interrupt my grandfather—I would be the only one listening to him, but then I was the only one who seemed to listen to anybody. They didn't talk to each other so much as to themselves. He would yell some humiliation or if she was sitting near enough kick her imperceptibly but efficiently under the table. Often if I could escape, I would follow her into the scullery and get a slice of the "dinner," some winks, and possibly some story about how my grandfather had spent a week-end with some famous music-hall artist at Brighton. She told a story like this with some pride, but I would know that she was scoring off him too. "Course *he* doesn't know we know about it." It must have eased the pain in her shin bone.

By dinner-time—which meant about two o'clock in the afternoon—the emotional temperature would be quite high. There would be baffling shrieks of laughter, yelling, ignoring, bawling, everyone trying to get his piece in. A big celebration would be the worst, like Christmas, when there was invariably a row. Sometimes there would be a really large gathering, and we would all go over to Tottenham, which was the family headquarters.

SETTING out from South London, it was an exciting journey. One never knew what might happen. There would be two or three dozen of us—somebody's brother would have a pint too many at the pub and perhaps hit his wife; carnation buttonholes would be crumpled; there would be tears and lots and lots of noise. The day would end up with someone—usually my father—at the piano and everyone shouting songs at each other. They bawled and laughed and they moaned. There was rivalry in the way they spoke about how hard they worked and

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there was no question that they did work hard—about the visits to the hospital and the *waiting*. They "talked about their troubles" in a way that would embarrass my middle-class observer. I've no doubt that they were often boring, but life still had meaning for them. Even if they did get drunk and fight, they were responding; they were not defeated.

My father's family were baffled by them. Their value system was quite different. What impressed me most when I was a small boy about my other grandparents, and all my father's relatives, was the calm that surrounded them. Not only were their voices soft, but they actually *listened* to what you were saying. They came from South Wales and cared for the language they spoke. Not that I am suggesting that this is a ruling pattern among middle-class people, but most of their bawling seems to be done in *public* places, like theatres and restaurants—less at home. Besides, my father and all his family were particularly gentle. There were no fights, few rows, hardly ever tears. Whenever there was an argument, it was nearly always about *income* and mostly characterised by gravity and long stretches of silence.

My grandparents were the poorest members of the family—Grandfather had spent too much time away from his jewellery business, playing cricket. This may seem unlikely, and I shouldn't care to have to "explain" it in good old competent working-dramatist terms, but it is the literal truth. My grandmother's attitude to his cricket was rather similar to that of my other grandmother's attitude to weekends with famous music-hall artists. My father had worn his cousin's cast-off Eton suits, and there hadn't been a cook or maid in the house since the first World War.

They were kind, charming people, and I was deeply fond of them. I used to enjoy the time I spent there—which was a great deal—much more than that I spent with my relations in Fulham and Tottenham. They had a sense of fun which was as much a part of their assumption about life as their simple expectation that they should be waited on, that their children should go to public schools, that there should always be "income."

ONE day I was walking with my grandfather, when we were passed by a man who seemed to greet him rather cheerfully. He was answered with a curtness that was surprising for a man as gentle as my grandfather. "That man's a socialist," said my grandfather. I knew it couldn't be good from the quiet way he said it. He looked at me, and smiled. "That's a man who doesn't believe in raising his hat." That definition served me for a long time.

I am not going to define my own socialism. Socialism is an experimental idea, not a dogma; an attitude to truth and liberty the way people should live and treat each other. Individual definitions are unimportant. The difference between Socialist and Tory values should have been made clear enough by this time. I am a writer and my own contribution to a socialist society is to demonstrate those values in my own medium, not to discover the best ways of implementing them. I don't need to step outside my own home to canvass for the Labour Party. Years ago, T. S. Eliot wrote: "In a society like ours, worm-eaten with Liberalism, the only thing possible for a person with strong convictions, is to state a point of view and leave it at that." Substitute Toryism for Liberalism, and I'd say that this very roughly sums up my present socialist attitude—an experimental attitude to feeling. All the fields of experiment must be tackled by their own experts—the economists and sociologists, the town-planners and educationists, the industrial psychologists, the observers and law-makers and truth-seekers.

Nobody can be very interested in my contribution to a problem like the kind of houses people should have built for them, the kind of school they should send their children to, or the pensions they should be able to look forward to. But there are other questions to be asked—how do people live inside those houses? What is their relationship with one another, and with their children, with their neighbours and the

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people across the street, or on the floor above? What are the things that are important to them, that make them care, give them hope and anxiety? What kind of language do they use to one another? What is the meaning of the work they do? Where does the pain lie? What are their expectations? What moves them, brings them together, makes them speak out? Where is the weakness, the loneliness? Where are the things that are unrealised? Where is the strength? Experiment means asking questions, and these are all the questions of socialism. . . .

Now when the techniques of communication are almost boundless, there has never seemed to be so little to say to one another, or so little desire to say it. It could be an exciting, creative time, so let the scribblers scratch, and let England bleed; there will be singing one day. I hope so; I look forward to it.

The Victorians

For sixty years they worshipped weight and size.
Their homes and public buildings all reflect
That urge for ostentation we despise

And faith in specious grandeur we detect.
Those ponderous walls that seemed to bear such weight
And own the substance of their architect

Too often simply served to decorate.
The weight they seemed to bear was really raised
By joists of steel whose use they came to hate.

The same was true of language. Men who phrased
The vague and vaguely elevating sounds
Of words like "faith" and "progress" seemed amazed

That frames of syntax might provide the grounds
For claiming they made sense. Though we, no doubt,
Extol such virtues far beyond all bounds.

This points to what my poem is about.
Their sense of shame in order, and our pride,
Both over-emphasise and cancel out:

We strip too bare what they too coyly hide.
Yet stones and joists are complements. This taut
And rigid grammar's girders are implied

By all the concrete courses of our thought.
Richness of words, rich stonework: both arise
From truth to form deliberately sought.

George MacBeth

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The Nude Renewed

Sex, Style, and Geometry

I SUPPOSE it would be quite possible to deal with Sir Kenneth Clark's *The Nude: A Study In Ideal Form* as if it were an especially accomplished work of scholarship and criticism, delightful for the vivacities of its observation and expression, commendable for the directness of its communication, for the grace with which it involves us in ideas about the plastic arts, which are far less easily available to most of us than equivalent ideas about literature. And certainly *The Nude* deserves any praise we may want to give to its sensibility and—using the grim word in the pleasantest sense—its pedagogy. But beyond the intrinsic qualities of the book we have to be aware of the significance of its appearance at this moment of cultural history, of what its æsthetic assumptions, set forth with considerable authority, mean to us at the present time.

A good way to understand the particular interest and force of *The Nude* is to bring to mind the well-known essay by José Ortega y Gasset, *The Dehumanization of Art*. This essay was first published in 1925, when the modern movement in art was already fully formed but still had to make its way with the public. Ortega wrote in defence of the new art. He did not, it would seem, undertake the defence out of love, for there is no note of joy or of discovery in the whole essay, but rather out of intellectual conviction. What he admired in the new styles, as he says again and again, is that, as between the æsthetic elements of a work and the "human" elements, the æsthetic dominates and the "human" is sunk nearly out of sight. Of the seven qualities which Ortega discovers in modern art, he cites as the first two the tendency "to dehumanise art" and "to avoid living forms." The theory of a wholly non-representational art had not yet been fully established at the time Ortega wrote, and he expresses his doubt of the possibility that there can be an art that does not make *some* reference to actual objects. But his praise of the new art consists chiefly of the reiterated declaration that, referring as it must to an actual object, it suppresses all sense of responsibility to the object as what Ortega calls a "lived reality"; it makes no appeal to the beholder which is not strictly pictorial, which is not grounded upon organisation and design. Any other appeal is held to be adventitious and illegitimate—as we say, "impure" and, worse, "literary."

But beyond this positive æsthetic intention of the new art, Ortega perceives another intention to which he gives full weight and an implied approval. This is a cultural intention, a matter of conscious, embattled taste—a massive dislike of, and hostility to, the art of the past. "For about twenty years now," Ortega says, "the most alert young people of two successive generations —in Berlin, Paris, London, New York, Rome, Madrid—have found themselves faced with the undeniable fact that they have no use for traditional art; moreover, that they detest it." And what he isolates as the detestable thing in traditional art is the "human" element. "It will not be easy to interest a person under thirty in a book that under the pretext of art repeats the doings of some men and women. To him such a thing smacks of sociology and psychology. He would accept it gladly if issues were not confused and those facts were told him in sociological and psychological terms. But art means something else to him." Here, where he speaks of literature, Ortega would seem to exaggerate, but he does so in a significant way and his statement of the case can be allowed to stand for the moment without question. He is on firmer ground when he speaks of the plastic arts—"it is not an exaggeration," as he says, "to assert that modern paintings and sculpture betray a real loathing of living forms or forms of living beings." And again: "Why is it that the round and soft forms of living bodies are repulsive to the present-day artist?"

ORTEGA's essay sums up in a very striking and accurate way the tendency of modern "advanced" taste. To be sure, as I have

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suggested, Ortega goes too far when he undertakes to assimilate the theory and practice of literature to the theory and practice of the plastic arts. Perhaps in 1925 Proust and Joyce could reasonably be thought of as authors whose works "satisfy the urge to escape and elude reality," and express "contempt for the old monumental forms of the soul and unhuman attention to the micro-structure of sentiments, social relations, characters." But thirty-two years later this judgment seems quite wrong. As we now read *Ulysses* and *Remembrance of Things Past,* what is likely to strike us is exactly their massive monumentality, the pathos of their commemoration and celebration of the old humanistic soul. Sooner or later, as we think about them, we murmur, "Sunt lacrymæ rerum," and we do not find their pathos to be less moving because the Vergilian sadness is touched with the Lucretian desperateness. Now that we are no longer astonished by the devices and distortions of Proust and Joyce, we can scarcely fail to see how committed they are to the old humanistic soul and how they delight in all the old elements of the literary art—pathos, humour, heroism, the charm and excitement of good and evil.

But so far as the plastic arts go, Ortega's summary is substantially true. In the plastic arts, the main tendency, the significant tendency, has indeed been away from the human, from the "lived reality." And where this tendency has been resisted—I mean by artists of some power and distinction, not by mere academicians—it has produced an art that is likely to make us uneasy, as with a sense of unearned compromise. Speaking for myself, I find that although my relation with "dehumanised" painting is at best an ambiguous one, I am almost always made uncomfortable by modern representations of "lived reality." Whatever reservations I may have about, say, Jackson Pollock, I am on easier terms with him than with, say, Ben Shahn, and I think that my preference is pretty typical of the educated classes, in America at least.

This being our situation, it comes as a surprise, and even as a shock, that Sir Kenneth Clark should at this time ask us to consider, of all things, The Nude, that genre of traditional art which is most extravagantly "human." Sir Kenneth says of the nude that it is not a subject of art but a form of art—"an art form invented by the Greeks in the fifth century"—and it is, of course, the form of art which has the closest relation to "lived reality." As Sir Kenneth says, "the human body, as a nucleus, is rich in associations, and when it is turned into art these associations are not entirely lost. For this reason it seldom achieves the concentrated æsthetic shock of animal ornamentation, but it can be made expressive of a far wider and more civilising experience. It is ourselves and arouses memories of all the things we wish to do with ourselves; and first of all we wish to perpetuate ourselves."

This brings us at once to what would seem to be for Sir Kenneth—and for most of us—the central fact about the nude, its erotic implication. Sir Kenneth treats his subject under several heads—he devotes a chapter, called "Apollo," to the male nude; one to the nude as expressive of energy, chiefly spiritual; one to the nude as expressive of pathos; one to the nude as expressive of ecstasy, spiritual as well as sexual; and one to what he calls "the alternative convention," which is the tradition, chiefly Germanic, of representing the human body realistically, even satirically, and wholly without the idealisation that marks the main tradition. But the aspect of the nude which involves him in as it were a definitive way is the female nude in all its erotic appeal, and for the treatment of this he needs two chapters, "Venus I," "Venus II." He makes it the very essence of his discourse that the erotic emotions are of paramount importance in our response to the nude, the nude being for him "the most serious of all subjects in art," the Word made flesh and dwelling among us full of grace and truth. (No one will want to tax him with inconsistency in the matter of whether or not the nude is a subject of art or a form of art.)

Most of us have been taught from childhood on, that we ought to regard the nude statue or picture as having been purged of all erotic emotion in its creation, as requiring of us that we suppress all erotic emotion in our response. It is worth observing that respectability and æsthetics issue in the same attitude and rely on the same word—*purity*. Supposing the Victorian mamma or governess to be a lady of some cultivation, she would say to the young person she had in charge, "Yes, dear, don't laugh—that *is* a statue of a naked lady, although it's more polite to say ***nude***. It is Greek, or, if not actually Greek, very like the statues that the ancient Greeks used to make, and educated people admire it very much. They admire it because of its artistic value and they don't think of her in the least as if she were a real lady. That is why the vicar and your Papa's friend the Professor think so highly of it, as I know they do." There is no difference between what Mamma or the governess said and what was said by the established æsthetic theory of the later nineteenth century, with its insistence on the autonomy and purity of the æsthetic emotion.

Sir Kenneth, to sum up the general tendency of this theory, quotes Professor Alexander's statement: "If the nude is so treated that it raises

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in the spectator ideas of desires appropriate to the material object, it is false art and bad morals." To this dictum Sir Kenneth replies by standing it on its head: "No nude, however abstract, should fail to arouse in the spectator some vestige of erotic feeling, even though it be only the faintest shadow—if it does not do so, it is bad art and false morals. The desire to grasp and be united with another human body is so fundamental a part of our nature that our judgment of what is known as 'pure' form is inevitably influenced by it."

THUS the issue is joined. But we cannot miss seeing that it is an issue not only between Sir Kenneth's æsthetics and that of the later 19th century but also between Sir Kenneth's æsthetics and that of the radical "dehumanised" art of our time. The latter is continuous with the former and there is no essential difference between Professor Alexander's position and that of Ortega.

In point of fact, it isn't always possible for Sir Kenneth to sustain his statement about the erotic implication of every good representation of the nude, or at least not in a direct and simple way—Rembrandt's nudes, for example, or almost any of the Pietàs can be called erotic only in a negative sense. But the erotic or quasi-erotic intention is certainly a dominant one in the genre of the nude and Sir Kenneth misses no opportunity to insist upon it. "These sweet, round bodies are as sensuous as strawberries," he says of Raphael's *Three Graces*. He speaks of "the landscape of the breasts and thorax, . . . the most satisfying that the eye can rest on," and takes note of the "lineaments of gratified desire" of the nude figure of Titian's *Sacred and Profane Love*. He remarks with regret the "unaphrodisiac quality of certain of Titian's nudes" and says of the figure of Truth in Botticelli's *Calumny* that she is "of all nudes that are not positively ugly, the least desirable."

Here, then, is "lived reality" being asserted with a vengeance. But this assertion, although in itself it is refreshing, is in itself not especially interesting as æsthetic doctrine—after all, there is always some grizzled, angry academician to assert that the nude is a celebration of the natural beauty of the human body. What does make Sir Kenneth's doctrine interesting and important, is that it abolishes the dichotomy between desire and thought, between "the human" and "the æsthetic." Sir Kenneth speaks, for example, of what the French call the *déhanchement*, the uneven distribution of the body's weight upon the feet which has the effect of throwing one hip outward. ". . . This disposition of balance," he says, "has automatically created a contrast between the arc of one hip, sweeping up till it approaches the sphere of the breast, and the long, gentle undulation of the side that is relaxed; and it is to this beautiful balance of form that the female nude owes its plastic authority to the present day." So much for the description of the charm of the pose. But the exposition goes on: "The swing of the hip . . . is a motive of peculiar importance to the human mind, for by a single line, in an instant of perception, it unites and reveals the two sources of our understanding. It is almost a geometric curve; and yet, as subsequent history shows, it is a vivid symbol of desire."

It isn't hard to see whose pupil Sir Kenneth is. The spirit of William Blake informs his book at every point. Just as the nude figure of *Sacred and Profane Love* is said to be of peculiar charm because she shows "the lineaments of gratified desire," so the personality of Rubens is praised because his nude figures "never pause to calculate or nurse an unacted desire." If energy is the subject of discourse, it is energy as Blake understood it—"energy which is endless delight." And surely it is Sir Kenneth's commitment to Blake that makes it possible for him to speak of humanism as if the word still had interest and authority. Nowadays humanism is much discredited; it is very dull; it is downright academic. But Sir Kenneth's humanism is not that of the universities and of the universities' self-pitying praise of themselves. It is rather the humanism of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. This humanism conceives of form, style, order, discipline, knowledge, and control, not as being opposed to passion, energy, eroticism, and ecstasy, but as growing out of the intensities of life as their natural expression. Sir Kenneth can speak of "the union of sex and geometry" which is encompassed in the nude, and remark on "how deeply the concept of the nude is linked with our most elementary notions of order and design." It is the most natural thing in the world for him to connect sex with style: commenting on Rubens' preoccupation with the female haunches, he says that Rubens "was a master of the baroque and the bottom is a baroque form." And how much we learn about the nature of style when, with some antecedent awareness of the world-wide impulse of human beings to decorate and alter and re-mould their bodies, we are reminded of "how much formalisation the female body can undergo and still preserve some tremor of its first impact."

IN SHORT, *The Nude* challenges the whole idea of the "pure" æsthetic emotion which, all through our century, has been a prized and characteristic possession of the intellectual élite. (There are signs that this idea is not quite so powerful as it was even a few years ago. It

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seems to me, for example, that opera, that most impure of the musical genres, the one that relies most upon "lived reality" and makes most reference to the erotic emotions, is now again being permitted to be a source of fully legitimate pleasure; the belief, once so full of prestige, that only "pure" music, pre-eminently the string quartette, was appropriate to fine sensibilities no longer has its old unqualified authority.)

But if Sir Kenneth challenges the idea of purity, if he in effect establishes the æsthetic legitimacy of the "lived reality," he doesn't in the least fortify Mr. Selden Rodman, who, in his recent *Conversations With Artists*, exhibits so uneasy a yearning for an art which shall be "human" and "humanist" and shall present again, for our comfort and faith, an "image of man." Mr. Rodman's attitude is analogous to that of those scholars and philosophers and religious personalities who annually meet in conferences to ask that mankind affirm the Western tradition, the Hellenic tradition, the Hebraic-Christian tradition. Why do we instinctively know that nothing living can come out of these demands for the establishment of the "human" and the "humanistic"? Is it not because William Blake is never invited to the conferences, because it is always *papers* that are read, and not encausticated copper plates, because everyone speaks of "Heaven" and no one of "Hell," because the virtuousness and the explicit social idealism of the meetings have no knowledge of energy as endless delight or of the charm of the lineaments of gratified desire or of the danger of the unacted desire—of, in short, all the things that Blake knew and that Sir Kenneth takes account of when he speaks of the "human" and "humanism"?

The Nude will, in all probability, have a very considerable effect upon modern taste. I can't imagine anyone reading it and not learning to look at the art of the past with bolder and more affectionate and more demanding eyes, and an unembarrassed readiness to accept the æsthetic propriety of an avowed "lived reality." This will not necessarily depreciate our relation to the "dehumanised" art of our time, but it will almost certainly change that relation. And probably for the better, making it less inert, more active and articulate.

Lionel Trilling

Quest

I seek the sky that lures me to a pond,
The kind of sky that would not stay in place
When I have set some tree to point it out in space
And come beneath and found it far beyond;
The boats sailing upon the water, loaned
Only in movement the changeful form of grace,
Those I could not take in my embrace,
Without my losing what I put in bond;
Whatever reflection there I see afar
Gone when I come by (and that that lingers
On the pond all my hand may ever mar);
And the children on the bank who are astir,
Their boats pushed preciously beyond their fingers
To where that thing is dear that still is far.

Nathaniel Zimskind

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L'Affaire Djilas

R. H. S. Crossman: STANDING MARX ON HIS HEAD

IMPORTANT books about politics are normally written not by important politicians, but by minor participants or, even more frequently, by observers on the sidelines. Milovan Djilas' *The New Class: An Analysis of the Communist System* (Thames and Hudson, 21s.) is an exception to this norm. Here is a treatise on Communism which may well prove as epoch-making as John Locke's treatise *Of Civil Government*. Yet it is written (and it gains from being written) by one of the outstanding leaders of Yugoslav Communism.

The American publishers compared Milovan Djilas with Karl Marx, and called his book "*the* Anti-Communist Manifesto." I am glad this comparison has been removed from the British dust-cover, since it is both unfair to Djilas and misleading to the prospective reader. Nothing could be less like a manifesto than these abstruse, elliptical reflections on the nature of Communism. In the *Communist Manifesto*, Marx was vulgarising his theories and proclaiming to the outside world the articles of his Communist creed: in *The New Class* Djilas has composed an esoteric work, a Marxist polemic against Communism. I fear it will be largely unintelligible except to those who have been thoroughly grounded in Communist methodology. Indeed, the reader must we well enough acquainted with international Marxist jargon to extract what Djilas means from a semi-literate translation.

Who is responsible for this translation? The publishers only express their gratitude to Messrs. Morton Puner and Konrad Kellen for "editorial assistance"; but I gather that Djilas wrote in Serbo-Croat and these two Americans are entirely responsible for the English version. From what I know of Djilas' literary background, I cannot believe that his original text deserved the treatment Messrs. Puner and Kellen gave it. Here is a not uncharacteristic paragraph of their "translationese"!

> "Numerous features which distinguish contemporary Communism from other movements in the use of methods can be found. These features are predominantly quantitative or are actuated by varied historical conditions and by the aims of Communists."

Mr. Djilas himself, however, must take the main responsibility for the obscurity and incoherence of his book. No doubt the conditions under which it was written explain a lot. If he had had access to Western libraries, and if he had had the opportunity to test generalisations based on his personal experience against a wider experience, he would probably have filled in many of the gaps in his argument and removed some of its minor inconsistencies. However that may be, this English version is a book which an examiner on either side of the Iron Curtain would have to reject if it were submitted as a thesis for a doctorate of philosophy. It is, in fact, a bad book: repetitious—despite its brevity—and full of contradictions.

Nevertheless, like Locke's *Of Civil Government*, it is one of those bad books which may well become a classic. If Djilas is deeply self-contradictory in his main argument, it is because he is grappling with real contradictions. If he is incoherent, it is because he is trying to formulate new ideas in an old terminology and to transcend Communism while his thought still runs in the categories of the dialectic. Indeed, the fact that this is a

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crabbed Marxist analysis, written from right inside the Communist camp, is its chief value. If Djilas' conclusions had been reached by a British, a French, or an American politician, they would not have been worth putting down on paper. If his arguments had been developed by an exile from the Communist world, who had learnt to think in Western democratic categories, they would only be interesting as an example of successful adaptation to environment. The importance of *The New Class* lies precisely in the fact that it is a refutation of Marxist-Leninism, composed within the categories of Marxist-Leninism.

FOR the convenience of non-Marxist readers, it may be useful at this point if I try to present Mr. Djilas' argument in summary form, translating it, where possible, into plain English.

(1) Communism is the only ideology under which the proletariat of underdeveloped countries can carry out the revolution required to liberate them from imperialist exploitation. Once this exploitation has ended by a successful revolution, the only historical function of the Communists is to industrialise their countries.

(2) In contrast with the strong working-class movements of the West, which prefer anti-dogmatic, reformist ideologies, the working class in backward countries was compelled by its weakness to accept the exclusive and dogmatic ideology of Communism. A totalitarian ideology, in fact, is the precondition for revolution in a backward country, just as totalitarianism is the pre-condition for the rapid industrial transformation of a backward economy.

(3) During the struggle for power, the Communists sincerely believe in their ideals and aspire to put them into practice. The Communist Party becomes "an indestructible family, incomprehensible and impenetrable to others, inflexible in the solidarity and identity of its reactions, thoughts, and feelings . . ., irresistible to its followers and to many others, powerful because it is fused into one piece, one soul, and one body."

(4) Directly power is achieved, degeneration is inevitable. "The wonderful human characteristics of an isolated movement are slowly transformed into the intolerant and Pharisaical morals of a privileged caste. . . . Exclusive caste spirit and complete lack of political principles and virtues become conditions for the power and maintenance of the movement." This decay is the inevitable result of the exclusive, dogmatic ideology required for a successful revolution.

(5) The ideological unity which the Communist Party makes obligatory on its members leads inevitably to personal dictatorship. Every Communist State goes through three phases. Declining from the revolutionary phase—linked in Russia with the personality of Lenin, through the dogmatic phase—linked with Stalin—to the pragmatic phase—linked with a collective leadership.

(6) Every Communist State is owned and exploited by the New Class. This New Class is not the same as the Party, but develops out of it. "The party makes the class; but the class grows stronger while the party grows weaker." It consists of "the Communist political bureaucracy, which uses, enjoys, and disposes of nationalised property. . . . Having achieved industrialisation, the New Class can only strengthen its position and pillage the people."

(7) The Communist revolution is "the first revolution to be carried out to the advantage of the revolutionaries." Because the Communists are unable to accomplish what they believe in, their actions inevitably contradict their principles. They can never acknowledge this, and have to pretend that they are achieving Socialism when they are in fact subjecting the people to exploitation more ruthless than under any previous régime.

(8) The Communist system would be rightly described as State Capitalism if the State ran the economy. But in fact the State is used by the Communist class as an instrument of exploitation. This is why a change to State Capitalism would be a mark of progress from the present dictatorship of the New Class.

(9) This dictatorship carries the seeds of its own destruction. "While bringing about the

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most complete despotism, Communist revolution has also created the basis for the abolition of despotism. . . . This is because industrialisation, which first made Communism inevitable, will finally make the Communist form of government and ownership superfluous." The overthrow of the Communist dictatorship will come through divisions first among the members of the new class and then between the various Communist countries. Both Collective Leadership and National Communism are "characteristics of Communism in decline."

(10) This decline is hastened when members of the new class perceive the contradiction between the theory of the classless society and the practice of their class dictatorship. "The battle for its own existence will drive the new class itself or individual fractions of it to renounce the current means it is using or to renounce the idea that its goals are realisable." At this point, the establishment of a military dictatorship would be a sign of progress.

I cannot pretend that this arid and abstract dialectic is attractive. It is, however, enlivened by a number of shrewd insights. Here are some examples.

"Most of the illegal organisations in Communist régimes are created by the secret police in order to lure opponents into them and put them in a position where the police can settle accounts. The Communist government does not discourage objectionable citizens from committing crimes. In fact it prods them into such crimes."

"Communist leaders really believe that they know economic laws and that they can administer production with scientific accuracy. The truth is that the only thing they know is how to seize control of the economy."

"Under Communism thefts and misappropriations are inevitable. It is not just poverty that motivates people to steal the 'national property' but the fact that the property does not seem to belong to anyone."

"Lenin was broadly right when he stated that politics is 'concentrated economy.' But this has been reversed in the Communist system. There, economy has become concentrated politics."

IF MARX stood Hegel on his head, Djilas has done the same to Marx. He has worked out a dialectical argument to prove that, instead of introducing a classless society, a Communist revolution must inevitably lead to the dictatorship of the New Class. Moreover, he demonstrates that this period of exploitation by the Communists is as inevitable a phase in the development of a backward Eastern country as monopoly capitalism and imperialism were in that of the West.

I must admit that this "dialectical" refutation of Communism is as unconvincing to me as the dogma itself. Why, for instance, with the example of India before me, should I assume that a Communist revolution *must* be the precondition of industrialisation in a backward country? Why should I take for granted that a revolutionary leadership, in order to obtain the devotion of its followers, *must* make them accept an exclusive, dogmatic ideology? The truth is that Djilas is here guilty of the chief error he ascribes to Communist ideology. In his whole account of the Communist revolution and the emergence of the New Class, he is as mechanically determinist as his Stalinist opponents. "In history," he writes, "it is not important who implements a process. It is only important that the process be implemented. Such was the case in Russia and other countries in which Communist revolutions took place. The revolution created forces, leaders, organisations, and ideas which were necessary to it."

The worst of this kind of mechanical determinism is that it gives those who preach it the impression that they are announcing scientific laws, when all they are in fact doing is to describe their own experience and then generalise it into a dogma. When Djilas describes the Communist revolution as the "inescapable necessity" of a backward country in need of industrialisation, all he really means is that Yugoslavia, Russia, and China —the only places where Communist parties achieved a revolution—were all undeveloped countries. When he asserts that a revolutionary party *must* have a dogmatic ideology, and links this inevitability with the noble ethics of a freedom fighter, he is generalising his own experience with the Yugoslav partisans—

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just as his dogma that Communists are inevitably corrupted by power derives very obviously from his own bitter experience in Moscow and Belgrade since 1945.

When we analyse his central concept of the New Class, we find that he is guilty of another characteristically Marxist fallacy. Claiming to use the word "class" in the strict Marxist sense, he asserts that his New Class "owns and controls nationalised production." Yet, as we read on, this strict definition is blurred. Djilas admits that the New Class is not a social class when he observes that, under Stalin as under Napoleon, there was a "career open to the talents." "Nowhere at any time has the road been as wide open to the devoted and loyal as it is in the Communist system." A little later we find him admitting that the New Class is not strictly an economic class, since membership of it is not identical with the ownership of property. Finally, he concludes, "To be an owner or a joint owner in the Communist system means that one enters the ranks of the ruling political bureaucracy, and nothing else." (!) In fact, the New Class is only a Marxist metaphor, not a reality. Yet, if Djilas were to admit that what he is describing is a ruling clique and not a new Marxist class, the main pillar of his dialectical refutation of Communism would come tumbling down.

Djilas sees the Western world as the dialectical antithesis of the Communist system; and, just as he asserted that revolution is inevitable in a backward country, so he asserts the inevitability of reformism in the West. One dogma has as little justification as the other. If proletarian revolution was inevitable and desirable in Yugoslavia, why is it impossible and undesirable in Italy? If reformism is practicable in the West, why is it excluded outside Europe? In a characteristic passage, Djilas discusses the revolutionary changes caused by modern warfare: "These invisible military and economic revolutions are of enormous extent and significance. They are more spontaneous than revolutions achieved by force; that is, they are not burdened to as great an extent with ideological and organisational elements. Therefore such revolutions make it possible to register in a more orderly way the tendencies of movements in the modern world." Translated from Marxist jargon into plain English, this passage is an admission that a violent revolution, carried out by a political party, as in Yugoslavia, is "less spontaneous" (a less faithful expression of the popular will to freedom) than the peaceful economic evolution achieved under Western democratic institutions.

What a violent method of thinking this dialectic is! It compels the Marxist to distort his picture of historical evolution, first by vulgarising all change into a conflict of extremes and then by hailing whatever emerges from this conflict as a new synthesis. Djilas' discovery, for instance, that the rulers of the Communist world are dictators and exploiters of their subject peoples leads him automatically to jump to the conclusion that the non-Communist world must be a liberal antithesis to it. The cold war, we are told, is a struggle between positive and negative forces, and the unification of the world community "will be effected through the opposition of these systems." In this process the Communist system will always remain the main obstacle to unity, because here the State is merely an instrument of exploitation, whereas in Britain and America the State has become a factor on the side of unity. The Americans, Djilas observes, are "carrying out nationalisation on an even vaster scale, not by changing the form of ownership but by putting a considerable portion of the national income into the hands of the Government." So America, according to Djilas, is revealed as the really Socialist State, and the classless society will be finally achieved when—the backward countries having been duly industrialised—the Communist dictatorships are superseded by Western-type democratic governments, which do not own the national economy, as the New Class owns it, but administer it under the control of an elected Parliament.

I MUST say that I enjoy watching Marx stood on his head, but the doctrine which results from this procedure will scarcely

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stimulate liberalism in the Western world. Indeed, I am afraid that the chief effect of *The New Class* on those people who are likely to read it most eagerly and praise it most highly will be to increase their intellectual complacency and political conservatism. Nor will it have much value for Western Social Democrats, since very few of us accept the validity of Marxist dialectic. Where it should be read and analysed line by line is in the Communist countries. It is, indeed, a sobering thought that, among a great majority of the human race to-day, the Communist dialectic is accepted as the only valid method of thinking about politics. Even outside the Communist countries, a large part of the intelligentsia in Asia and Africa are at least half inclined to accept it.

The importance of *The New Class* is that it provides for this intelligentsia of the Communist and of the uncommitted world not merely a Marxist critique of Communism (that has often been done before) but a Marxist "treatise of Civil Government." No wonder the book is difficult, inconsistent, incoherent! Indeed, to understand it fully the reader must actually participate in the tortuous escape of a Communist mind from the Communist prison in which it has been confined, and share with that mind its agonising inability to describe in the categories of the prison-house—the only categories it knows—the freedom it now enjoys. Will *The New Class* be permitted to reach the readers at which it is aimed? In the non-committed countries there will be no difficulty. But Djilas knows better than anyone else that Khrushchev's anti-Stalinism and Tito's National Communism do not connote any real liberalisation, but are merely defensive mechanisms, employed by the New Class as a result of their new insecurity. Ironically enough, those Communists in Yugoslavia and Poland who are struggling most eagerly to escape out of Stalinism are least likely to be permitted the access to this book. They might disagree with it violently, but they would, I think, have to admit that its author beckons them from ahead along the road they have chosen.

Morgan Phillips: THE REBEL AND THE PRISONER

WHEN I first met Milovan Djilas in Belgrade in 1950 I took it as a matter of course that our discussions would follow the same formal, guarded character that seemed to be the standard adopted in all Communist dictatorships at that time. At first there were the familiar assurances to my colleagues of the Labour Party deputation that we were free to ask any questions we liked and to discuss any matter we chose. For the sake of amity, we resisted the temptation to point out that we were more interested in the candid answers than in the careful questions we had prepared. And indeed, our prudence was well rewarded, for I was never more surprised in my life at the staggering critical frankness of this Communist statesman, who for three years had been plugging the orthodox Stalin line.

This was only a short time after Yugoslavia's break with the Cominform, but Tito's rejoinder to Stalin's denunciations had been, up to that time, so restrained that it seemed that a reconciliation was still not out of the question. Djilas, however, destroyed that illusion completely. Not only did he hit ruthlessly at the sacred Russian "centralism," but his obvious enthusiasm for the importation of a more truly democratic system into his own country helped to clear a little of the extraordinary mystery which surrounded the dramatic quarrel between two great Communist leaders.

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The cold war was at its peak. The iron curtain had crashed across Europe, dividing the world into two camps. It seemed as if the line-up for the next conflict was complete—and then came the great rift between Tito and Stalin. What did it mean? What had caused the Communist empire to stagger so violently? After my two-day talk with Djilas, then the chief intellectual among the triumvirate at Tito's side, I had no doubt whatever that it was his critical and bitter resistance to the crushing domination of the Soviet Union that was the inspiration behind the break.

I HAVE seen Djilas several times since that memorable interview, and on each occasion I have been more and more impressed by his remarkable personality. Vigorous, straight-backed, and yet relaxed, he would discourse with quiet fluency on the problems of his country. When he dealt with the dispute with the Soviet Union he became more than usually sardonic. I quote the following passage from his conversation to show that even as long ago as 1950 he had fully made up his mind where his duty lay:

"I am now speaking as a Communist. We were a Communist Party, the most devoted to the Bolshevik Party of the Soviet Union, and we confirmed this with the war. We firmly believed their words about equality among peoples, about equality among workers' movements, that the Soviet Union had no hegemonic appetites, etc. Naturally, already during the war we felt certain differences between ourselves and them, but only in practical state relationships after the war these differences began to assume a more serious character. When it became obvious to us what the point was, although we were alone, a small undeveloped country, we said to ourselves: 'The people heeded us when we called them to fight in the war for their independence. They made enormous sacrifices in that war. We have no right to betray that struggle for the sake of some kind of words about the leading power in the world of socialism and about socialist solidarity with the Russians and I know not what!'"

But even more significant I found his views on democracy—which, undoubtedly, have put him in the jail where he languishes to this day. One of his favourite themes in those days was the development of democracy in a one-party state (he has revised his ideas considerably since then). Rejecting the necessity for a multi-party state he declared:

"It seems to me that the essence of democracy lies elsewhere—and it consists in this: that the masses are really in a position to express their opinions, that there is a guarantee that they can freely elect those whom they feel will represent them well, and that it should be possible to engage in the free battle of opinions. What were conditions like under capitalism? Capitalism did not thwart any battle of opinion as long as it did not endanger the capitalist ownership of the means of production. I do not see why this battle of opinion should not develop in our own country on the basis of socialist ownership."

No doubt he has long since regretted the lamentable naïvety of that deposition, for it was in the very act of furthering his ideas that he fell foul of the Communist system which brooks no opposition.

In his book, *The New Class*, which he wrote some six years later and managed to send to America for publication, he expresses a belated perception of the constant need of Communists to treat the State as an instrument of force. The Communist State, he says, cannot become a lawful state in which the judiciary would be independent of the Government. Even if Communist leaders wished to do so they could not create a lawful state without imperilling their own totalitarian power.

"An independent judiciary and the rule of law," he reflects somewhat bitterly, *"would inevitably make it possible for an opposition to appear. Laws in the Communist system guarantee all sorts of rights to citizens and are based on the principle of an independent judiciary. In practice there is no such thing."*

In that final staccato sentence he sums up the grim lesson which the monolithic State,

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much of it of his own making, had taught him.

IN THE Spring of 1954, after his final break with Tito, I learnt from a variety of sources of the deliberate and remorseless process of denigration and humiliation of the man who had been Yugoslavia's Vice-President.

After a staged trial in January 1955 his pension was taken away and his family victimised. He with his mother and son were forced to exist, until his imprisonment, on his wife's pay as an official, and from the sale of personal property. People who came into contact with him were immediately interrogated by the police and ordered to keep away from him or to act as an informer. Secret police occupied the flat opposite and photographed everyone who visited him. He was followed everywhere he went and there were constant attempts to provoke him and his wife to physical violence.

In April 1954 I learned that this persecution was to be intensified by attempts to compromise him publicly on moral issues and to destroy his marriage and family life. Sure enough, only a few weeks later, Stefania Djilas, his wife, was accosted in a Belgrade street by a screaming woman who declared she was Djilas' mistress and demanded that Mme Djilas give her husband a divorce. The police arrived and a court case followed.

So many of these reports reached me that I felt impelled to take what action I could to relieve the plight of a man whom I not only regarded as a friend, but who had once brought personally to the Labour Government in England the hope of a new spirit of freedom in the lands of Eastern Europe.

I WAS personally acquainted with Marshal Tito, whose guests my family and I had been on the island of Brioni in 1952. I therefore felt that a private letter to him expressing my real sorrow and concern at what was happening would make a deeper impression than a formal public statement. This letter has never been published, and I received no reply to it other than a crude, violent, and sustained attack in the Yugoslav press and radio; but it was essentially concerned with the issue of personal freedom and I did not want to become involved in other political questions.

I emphasised to Tito that it was painful to have to write such a letter because, for six years, I had been particularly interested in the experiments in Yugoslavia, and had become attached to many of the Yugoslav leaders through personal contacts. I had always appreciated the nature and the extent of the problems that they had to overcome, but recently I had been disturbed by news that I had received.

I reminded the Marshal that when Djilas and Dedijer were put on trial, Mr. Sam Watson and I had private talks with Yugoslav friends in London. We had explained that in our view this was the kind of test that would demonstrate to progressive opinion

> *"I have acquired humility,"* [*Djilas*] *told me in 1956, two years after his split. "I was arrogant when I lived the life of an important bureaucrat. I did not even know the price of bread. After my downfall, when I went for the first time to ride in a bus I entered by the wrong door. This has been a marvellous and true lesson for me. I was a stupid lug.*
>
> *"Now for the first time I have plenty of time to study. It is a good experience. And it is wonderful for my children. I assure you they were little bureaucrats. When Branko was six he used to go to the door and shout: 'Where is the car?' Now they know the value of money. They take part in our family councils to discuss accounts. I am finance minister. And I am more criticised than poor Rab Butler ever was in England. But I haven't yet been fired."*
>
> (C. L. Sulzberger, Chief Foreign Correspondent *New York Times*, in *The Big Thaw*.)

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throughout the world the measure of Yugoslav progress towards a real socialist democracy. We had been relieved at the result of the trial but we now feared that our relief had been misplaced.

I had been informed that Mr. Djilas had been deprived of his war pension; that members of his family had been dismissed from their jobs. This was extended even to the husband of one of Mr. Djilas' sisters. More distant relatives still had been dismissed from the army after long service because they visited his family. I emphasised that as Djilas was a political journalist he could not earn a livelihood in that field. I asked that something should be done to enable him to earn an honourable livelihood.

I confessed that I was appalled that the country which since 1950 I supported in articles and speeches should have slipped into the evil ways of the Cominform countries. I concluded by expressing the hope that Yugoslavia in its relations with individuals would demonstrate to the world the fundamental superiority of a socialist system of society. I asked for observations on these points.

THE main reply to this letter took the form of a savage attack on me by Veljko Vlahovic, President of the Foreign Relations Commission of the Socialist Alliance of the Working People of Yugoslavia, in the newspaper *Borba* on 20th May, 1956. The attack took the familiar form of the Communist "side-kick" or diversion of the argument to alleged weak points in the record of the Labour Party.

The long tirade concluded with the following solemn castigation: "The Yugoslav public, and not only the Yugoslav Church, are very displeased with the case of the internment of Makarios, to say nothing of the hangings in Cyprus or that terrible figure which was recently published on the executions in Kenya. I am not mentioning this out of any malice but because the Yugoslavs, as men who wish to perfect the human side of government, are very pained by the miseries and misfortunes of other people, as well as by a certain passivity and impotent resignation of the Party headed by Morgan Phillips, towards human tragedies of this type."

The only significance in this grotesque distortion of the truth is the desperation with which it must have been written. It was obviously only meant to be read by the ignorant, and one can only assume that the Yugoslav people have not been kept informed of the Labour Party's public declarations on the events in Cyprus and Kenya. I cannot understand why this should be, but it is not too late to make amends, nor indeed to publish the congratulations which the Greek Socialists conveyed to the Labour Party at the Congress of the Socialist International in Vienna on its handling of the Cyprus question.

The unprecedented publicity which Vlahovic's denunciation of my "interference" was accorded in Russia and the countries of Eastern Europe speaks for itself.

> *"At the end of January 1948, Stalin requested that a member of the Yugoslav Politburo, preferably Djilas, come to Moscow immediately. The specific mention of Djilas caused general surprise.... Later, however, the reason was understood. During Djilas' two stays in Moscow in 1944 and 1945, Stalin had become convinced that Djilas was a very frank man who said what he thought...."*
>
> (Vladimir Dedijer in *Tito Speaks*.)

THE climax came, however, with the Hungarian tragedy. Despite the rigid supervision of his activities, Djilas took the first opportunity of expressing his disgust with his Government's passive acceptance of the Russian intervention. In a statement to the French Press agency, Djilas attacked the Yugoslav decision to abstain in the United Nations vote to put Soviet military intervention in Hungary on the agenda of the assembly.

"This attitude on the part of the Yugoslav Government," he said, *"constitutes the aban-*

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donment of the principles of sovereignty and of the right of every nation to develop its own internal affairs." Hungary was threatened by "*the same imperialism which menaced the independence of Yugoslavia.*"

He was immediately arrested on a charge of "activities against the régime" and, after a secret trial, sentenced to three years' imprisonment which he is now serving in the self-same prison of Sremska Mitrovica to which he was sent for three years by the former fascist government of Yugoslavia. I have no doubt that the irony of the situation must appeal to Djilas' subtle mind. In his latest writings it is clear that he has recognised that the story of Milovan Djilas, intellectual revolutionary, Communist leader, unorthodox theoretician, and finally scapegoat, sums up the classic dilemma which is expressive of this day and age. Men of goodwill from all classes of society have supported the establishment of Communist régimes in many countries in the sincere belief that a democratic free society would eventually emerge peacefully from a revolutionary situation. The state, as Lenin had promised, would "wither away" and men would achieve the final state of civilisation in which they were truly their own masters. Djilas, like many others before him, has been earnestly seeking the elusive road back from Communism to a free society, but has failed.

Has he now finally rejected the materialistic view of all Communists that the end justifies the means? Knowing him as I do, I would say that he has, and has actively demonstrated in an unanswerable personal history that, on the contrary, the means determine the end and that Communism is, in effect, a disease that is incurable from within.

This voice from a prison cell in Central Europe is a small one, but it may yet shake the world.

Richard Lowenthal: DJILAS AND THE YUGOSLAV DILEMMA

MILOVAN DJILAS wrote his fundamental critique of contemporary Communism before the Hungarian and Polish events of last autumn. The article on the Hungarian revolution, which led to his imprisonment in the very same cell of Mitrovica gaol which he once inhabited as a Communist revolutionary, was written after the book was completed in manuscript; but the book shows that the author took the same uncompromising stand against the Communist Party State even before the object lesson of Hungary. Knowing the régime, he must have foreseen the consequences of publication even then—and must have deliberately faced them without the aid of the new impulse of hope afforded by the East European upheaval.

In fact, this is a book born not of hope, but of despair. I do not mean that Djilas has despaired of the future of humanity, of freedom, or of socialism; his faith in these has remained unshaken. But he indicates no concrete way in which the tyranny he describes is likely to be overcome; and he is explicit in rejecting any hope based on reforms initiated by the Communist rulers themselves on the Yugoslav pattern. It is this despair of the road chosen by his former comrades, the men whose ambitions and whose risks he shared in the war against Hitler, in the rise to power and in the struggle against Stalin, which forms the background of human experience behind the book, as it forms the background to the whole unique story of Djilas' development.

For it is a unique story: the story of the only Communist leader who started to doubt the fundamentals of Communist ideology, not because he had been defeated in an inner-party struggle over some acute issue of the day, but at the height of his power—because

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he perceived that the aims of the democratic reforms he was promoting were incompatible with the continued political monopoly of his party. The struggle against the "bureaucratic degeneration" of socialism, which the Yugoslav Communists had inscribed on their banner in the years of conflict with Stalin, found its limit in the position of the party bureaucracy; the decentralised self-government of the producers could not come to life while the party members in every workers' council or local government body were bound by party discipline to follow central instructions. It was when he proposed the abolition of party discipline and the pensioning off of party officials—the liquidation, in fact, of the party of the Bolshevik type that had conquered power and built the new state—in his series of articles in the party organ at the turn of 1953–4 that Djilas, then one of four vice-presidents of Yugoslavia and president of the National Assembly as well as a member of the innermost party leadership, found himself isolated and removed from all offices.

He had discovered, thanks to an unusual combination of searching sincerity and capacity for penetration, the fundamental dilemma of Titoist Yugoslavia which is also the fundamental dilemma of Soviet "de-Stalinisation" to-day: that any attempt at genuine "liberalisation" in a totalitarian state must release social forces whose free development must ultimately come up against the basic institution of one-party rule. To all those who benefit from that rule and are determined to defend it, such a dilemma is, of course, unmentionable if not actually unthinkable; and Djilas' insistence on mentioning it again and again was enough to turn him, in the eyes of his former comrades-in-arms, into a "demoralised individual," a "hysterical renegade," a "traitor" serving the "Western imperialists," and even an "imitator of Goebbels."

But while Djilas' recognition of the dilemma was an act of insight as well as of courage, his despairing response to the dilemma seems to me neither to follow with logical necessity, nor to be in accord with actual experience. Because he has understood that there is an ultimately irreconcilable conflict between democratic reform and single-party rule, he concludes that while the rule of the party lasts, the reforms are of little account. The freeing of the Yugoslav peasants from collectivisation is to him a temporary concession which the party might take back at will; the workers' councils have had their profit-sharing powers cut down to insignificant proportions and been reduced to one of the many fields of party activity; the comparative freedom in literature and the arts remains peripheral, and the possibility of renewed intervention by state and party authorities keeps hanging over them like the sword of Damocles. In Yugoslavia, as in Russia, this resigned conclusion may still come to be justified by events. But it is strangely out of harmony with the picture that presents itself to the visitor of Yugoslavia to-day.

For Yugoslavia has just now reached the stage where large numbers of people are beginning to enjoy the fruits of the years of reform—not, indeed, in the shape of political democracy, but of greater freedom, security, and above all, prosperity.

Compared with last year—I had not been there for fifteen months—the material improvement was the most conspicuous change. The women were better dressed; the textiles in the shops were of better quality and sold at more nearly normal European prices; there were many more motor-cycles and even a number of private cars in the streets; and intellectuals and minor officials, who used to have difficulty even in feeding their families, were proudly pointing to newly-acquired refrigerators (home-produced!) and other minor luxuries. Yugoslavia is, of course, still a poor country by Western or Central European standards; but by its own standards the years of austerity were over at last, and there was an unmistakable sense of ease.

Inquiries showed that the biggest single cause of this change had been a really spectacular increase in industrial production,

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deliberately concentrated by the government in the field of consumers' goods. Many factors, some of them fortuitious, had contributed to this. The huge "key projects" of industrialisation which had absorbed so large a part of the country's resources for many years have been completed at last, and are beginning to make their contribution to current output. The switch of investment to the light industries, talked about since the summer of 1953 and seriously tackled in the last two years, is also bearing fruit. Unpaid imports financed by American aid, Soviet cash credits, and West German compensation for victims of Nazism have combined with the output of the new coalmines and with better processing of agricultural produce to relieve the chronic shortage of raw materials and permit far more efficient use of existing industrial capacity—and that again means higher output at lower costs. All in all, industrial production this summer was running not at the planned 12 per cent. above last year's rate, but had risen at least 16 per cent. within a year; and this figure, an international record at the present time, was still regarded as an understatement by some well-informed economists, who predicted an even higher increase once the expected bumper harvest was in.

Now while a number of lucky breaks have clearly contributed to this result, it would not have been remotely possible but for the long-term effects of one basic reform which Djilas does not even mention in his book: the transition from a command economy, based on the intricate planning of every detail by the central authorities, to a market economy in which the managers of state factories, in consultation with the workers' councils, are free to adapt themselves to the changing requirements of the market within a broadly-planned framework. That reform, introduced at the beginning of 1952, brought striking immediate improvements in the range of goods available even though the cost at that time remained far too high; and it started a process of rationalisation which was the indispensable precondition for the present successes. In just the same way, the present harvest—estimated wheat yields per acre are 25 per cent. above last year's—is not just a gift of the weather god, kind though he has been for once, but in part the fruit of greatly increased use of fertiliser by peasants who, no longer harassed by forced deliveries or dragooned into *kolkhozes*, are beginning to heed the government's technical advice and to improve production with a will. True, it has taken the peasants five years from the abolition of delivering quotes and four years from the dissolution of the *kolkhozes* to come to trust the government to that extent; small wonder, as the latter reform was followed almost immediately by a new limitation of maximum land holdings to twenty-five acres and ritual declamations about the struggle against the "kulak" and for "socialism in the village." But gradually, experience has convinced them that a return to the former system is unlikely, and last autumn the National Assembly passed a solemn assurance that no further reductions of the maximum land holding would be introduced; it seems to have paid off.

Up to now, all the signs that the Yugoslav government wants its citizens to enjoy the fruits of this "New Economic Policy." The appallingly low wage rates were raised by an average 10 per cent. at the beginning of this year, and since the spring a number of tentative reforms in the wage system, introduced with retroactive effect, have probably brought the actual increase in earnings closer to 20 per cent. Moreover, the tendency of these reforms continues to be to relate wages more closely to productivity and to the total returns netted by the enterprise—with the result that both the rewards of individual skill and of higher standards of care and productivity are rising. Indeed, the chief result of last June's much-publicised Congress of Workers' Councils does not seem to have been an increase in the managerial powers of the Councils, but a more general recognition of the need to allow the more technically advanced factories in Slovenia and Croatia to retain a larger share of their gains instead of syphoning it off to the underdeveloped regions—both as an incentive for the backward factories to

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improve their standards, and as a precaution against the loss of underpaid skilled workers by economic emigration!

WHILE the workers are being enabled to buy some of the newly available goods through these wage increases, the intellectual and official classes are the main beneficiaries from the recent introduction of government-sponsored "consumer's credit." This is not granted to the shops, but directly by the National Bank to the consumer; all he has to do is to produce a certificate about his income from his superior—or in the case of self-employed persons from a colleague—and then he will receive credit up to a fixed proportion of that income. The new cars (when they are home-produced under Fiat licence and not imported second-hand), the refrigerators, and other electrical gadgets are largely financed in this way.

Nor is the percentage of more or less "self-employed" persons who are thus coming to enjoy middle-class standards insignificant; in fact, one of the most curious phenomena in Yugoslavia to-day is precisely the development of a "new class" quite distinct from that analysed by Djilas—a class not of party bureaucrats, but rather of "Nepmen" in the sense of the Russian 1920's. They include private craftsmen who are officially allowed to employ up to five workers, and often manage to give work to a considerably larger number of "black" employees who sit at home and figure officially as unemployed; doctors, who supplement their ridiculously low official salaries not only by private practice but by substantial amounts of "allowances" or "overtime pay" granted by competing local authorities in order to retain them; lawyers, who have not only partly recovered their traditional income from peasant litigation but find themselves often most profitably employed on lawsuits between different state-owned enterprises, and occasionally even able to win a citizen's case against a public authority! It was one of Djilas' original heretic demands that the courts should be truly independent and free from party interference; yet only the other day, the trial of a factory manager accused, with a great hullabaloo of propaganda, of squandering funds had to be stopped when his counsel successfully objected to political bias in the opening comments of a judge.

A society in which the peasants are being cajoled into higher production by free prices and the skilled workers prevented from emigration by higher wages, because the reimposition of a general ban on foreign travel is not regarded as desirable; in which state enterprises do not only compete and seek to make profits by studying the market, but engage in litigation, while lawyers challenge the political prejudices of the judges—such a society is evidently somewhat removed from the familiar image of totalitarianism, redrawn for us by Djilas in his book. And the difference is further emphasised if one looks at the Western films in Yugoslav cinemas, at the large number of translations of contemporary Western literature in the bookshops, at the range and tenor of news reporting (as well as the comic strips!) in the controlled Communist press, and at the Western newspapers, displayed alongside the re-admitted Soviet *bloc* papers, on the news-stands and in the coffee-houses.

Yet at the same time, this society shows very few signs of democracy—"socialist" or otherwise. In fact, now that Yugoslavia has lost her lean and hungry look, interest in political discussion there is probably less than at any time since the war—a phenomenon familiar from other countries emerging from heroic misery to unheroic comfort. Empty bellies, it seems, make for fanatic belief; full stomachs make for detached agnosticism. . . .

WHAT has grown out of the unshackling of the economy and of years of intense contact with the West is a country that looks authoritarian rather than totalitarian—with the ruling party unchallenged in its monopoly of political decision, but an ever-growing sector of life going on without noticeable interference by party and state. On the side of the individual, this means little scope—or desire—for democratic political activity, but a growing sphere of private free-

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dom, including the freedom privately to speak one's mind without fear if one is *not* an active politician. It proves nothing, of course, that I did not meet any Yugoslavs who shared Djilas' political views; no doubt they exist. But it did seem significant to me that I met several Yugoslav intellectuals, all loyal supporters of the Party, who disapproved openly of Djilas' imprisonment, of the petty and mean police chicanery which preceded his arrest, and of the fact that he is not allowed to receive the books of his choice. (Before the war, Djilas and other Communist inmates of Mitrovica used their prison term to study Marxism; now he cannot get such books on contemporary history as Churchill's war memoirs!) These people were not interested in Djilas as a political leader, but they would have felt happier had he been allowed to enjoy ordinary human rights—including the right to an opinion they did not share. It seemed a natural enough attitude for people to take in present-day Yugoslavia.

Yet it is not the attitude of the régime, and not only in relation to Djilas. The party leaders may be happy about the prosperity of the Yugoslav economy and even tolerant about the little speculative scum that shows here and there on the surface. They may proudly point out that the lessening of detailed state intervention is precisely what they aim at, and has been made possible by their success in promoting the natural growth of "socialist relations" rather than imposing artificial forms. But at the same time, they are obviously worried about the lack of ideological fervour among the young, about the spread of "bourgeois," Western ideas, and altogether about the manner in which the "natural growth" of society tends to push, not only the state, but the party itself into a peripheral rôle. For ultimately, Djilas is right; ultimately they feel that all this *is* a danger to their own power; and they remain watchfully determined to fight the danger.

This watchful awareness showed itself in the Yugoslav Communists' first reaction to the Poznan rising and to the Hungarian revolution, as now in the outcry that the publication of Djilas' book is an act of "Western intervention in the internal affairs of the Socialist states": it was fear for their own power which made them adopt an attitude of solidarity towards the very same satellite régimes to whom they used to feel so immeasurably superior.* The same fear, and the same solidarity, was the cause not only for the arrest of Djilas, but for the outburst of fury with which the Yugoslav press reacted last spring—*before* the victory of Khrushchev in Russia and the second reconciliation with Tito which followed it—to the Stockholm lecture of Dr. Vladimir Dedijer, merely because the former biographer of Tito had, without a single critical word about his own country, publicly upheld the well-known Yugoslav critique of Soviet "bureaucratic state capitalism." For it is the irony of the dilemma of Yugoslav Communism that while the interests of Yugoslavia's independence and prosperity clearly demand a continuation of its "non-aligned" foreign policy, the interests of the ruling party drag it back towards an ideological alignment with the Soviet *bloc*, now that the latter is willing to grant Yugoslav's right to equal status and to permit some difference in its internal institutions.

DJILAS wrote his book when the first period of Soviet-Yugoslav reconciliation was at its height—at the time when Tito, on Khrushchev's prompting, was shaking hands with Ernö Gerö, and before the Hungarian rising had shown what a blunder that handshake was. That is the background to his analysis that "National Communism" is concerned only with the independence of a particular ruling Communist bureaucracy within its own territory, and is perfectly compatible with the overriding community of

* It also shows itself in the régime's growing distrust of the Western press. Under a new press law recently confirmed by the National Assembly, resident foreign correspondents in Yugoslavia will no longer enjoy permanent accreditation, but will have to apply for a renewal every six months, submitting their books for examination each time. The pretext is that this is needed to prevent them from illegal currency transactions!

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interest of all Communist bureaucracies in preserving their power—once the Stalinist attempt to interfere with the independence of the junior partners has been abandoned.

Here again, recent developments have confirmed Djilas' analysis up to a point—at least as far as Tito's intentions are concerned. Despite the quarrel caused by Tito's half-hearted criticism of Soviet intervention in Hungary—a criticism prompted in part, as the text of his Pula speech of last November showed, by criticism of his own policy within the Yugoslav Community Party—and the subsequent attacks on Yugoslavia by Soviet and satellite leaders, the ideological truce between Moscow and Belgrade was tentatively renewed, on Yugoslav initiative, as early as last April, and formally sealed by the Bucharest meeting between Tito and Khrushchev at the beginning of August, after the latter's final victory over Molotov. Moreover, the Bucharest communiqué went in one important respect beyond the earlier documents of reconciliation—the Belgrade declaration of 1955 with its recognition of "different roads to Socialism," and even the Moscow declaration of 1956 with its "co-operation on the basis of Marxism-Leninism": it recognised the need for strengthening "the unity and co-operation of the Communist and workers' parties and the peoples of all Socialist countries"—a formula accepting the need for party ties with all the ruling parties of the Soviet *bloc*, even while leaving Tito free to work for "the unity of the labour movement" outside it, and thus precluding opposition on his part to a new kind of Cominform of ruling parties, including China. With each renewal, the ideological tie has thus become more intimate, and each time the position of non-alignment with either "camp" in world politics, which Yugoslavia formally still maintains, has been more seriously compromised.

As Khrushchev has been unable to bring any pressure to bear on Yugoslavia which would account for this development, Tito's motive must clearly be sought in his desire for mutual ideological reinsurance against the danger of democratic upheavals in the neighbouring countries and ultimately also in his own; though I should add that the itch of the old international revolutionary to influence developments in the Soviet Union, now that its internal system is clearly in flux, has probably also played a rôle. But if this tends to confirm Djilas' thesis, any glance at present-day Yugoslavia shows as clearly the obstacles to any effective return into the Soviet *bloc*—obstacles rooted in an experience which has deeply influenced the economic and cultural life of the country, and even the ideology of the party.

It is not just a question of the importance of American wheat and cotton deliveries and West German compensation payments, nor even of the general importance of Western trade with Yugoslavia, which still far outweighs actual and projected aid from, and trade with, the Soviet *bloc*. It is not even only a question of the value of Yugoslavia's internal economic reforms—the market economy and the dissolution of *kolkhozes*—which Russia shows no signs of adopting, and which are just now beginning to bear fruit. It is the broad and basic fact that after the Stalinist experience, followed by a number of years during which the country has been increasingly open to Western contacts, the immense majority of Yugoslavs, including a sizable proportion of party members, are profoundly convinced of the economic and cultural superiority of the West and of their own greater affinity with it. No better illustration could be given of this fact than the figures, published in *Borba* on 12th August, of the number of students in Belgrade secondary schools who choose to learn Russian as their first foreign language, which until 1950 was obligatory. It is 1·5 per cent.—a big increase against the low point of 1 per cent in 1952–3!

These are the kind of facts which have again and again convinced Western residents of Yugoslavia that a return to the Soviet fold is impossible. Personally, I should say somewhat more cautiously, knowing that the power of the party dictatorship is still intact, that such a return could be forced on the reluctant people of Yugoslavia only at the risk of a major upheaval. Nor would such an up-

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heaval, in my opinion, leave the unity of the party itself intact. For the years of conflict with Stalinism have led to important revisions in Yugoslav Communist theory—revisions which, however timid they may appear to Djilas, cannot now be wiped out with a stroke of the pen just because the diplomatic situation has changed.

WHEN the Yugoslav Communists found themselves blockaded and treated as "fascists" and "agents of imperialism" by the whole Soviet *bloc* after their break with Stalin, they felt the need both to broaden the basis of their domestic support and to explain to their own cadres how the Soviet Union, until then revered by them as the "Fatherland of Socialism," could have gone so wrong. They sought to achieve the first by their reforms, beginning with the creation of the Workers' Councils as organs of management for the state enterprises, and the decentralisation of administration. It was logical, then, to explain Stalin's policy as the result of a "bureaucratic degeneration" of the Soviet Union—of its failure to break up the bureaucratic crust which had arisen from the need to destroy the old ruling classes, and to promote the self-government of producers by reforms similar to those now undertaken by Yugoslavia. The Soviet Union, the Yugoslav Communists were taught, had failed to move forward to socialism and had been ossified in a stage of bureaucratic state capitalism.

We have already mentioned Djilas' criticism of the limitations of this theory; his point is that the real ruling class in a Communist state is the party bureaucracy, and that the ordinary administrative and economic bureaucrats are mere servants of the true rulers—just as they are the servants of the government or of the big monopolies in a capitalist state. But the official Yugoslav theory served its purpose of pointing up the difference between Stalinist Russia and the reformed Communism of Yugoslavia well enough—until the day of the Belgrade declaration. That declaration amounted to an admission by each side that the other's form of "socialism," though different in detail, was in principle as legitimate as its own; accordingly, experiences could be exchanged, but attacks had to stop.

At first the Yugoslav Communists accepted this "ideological non-aggression pact" in a hopeful spirit, expecting that the exchange of experiences would soon lead both the satellite states and the Soviet Union itself to adopt some of the basic Yugoslav reforms. When it became clear that the Soviet leaders were most unwilling to create workers' councils on the Yugoslav model, this was explained by Tito as due to the resistance of a group of "Stalinist" reactionaries in the Soviet leadership; and after the Hungarian rising, the whole discussion flared up again, with the Soviet ideologues indicting the Yugoslav system as "semi-anarchist" and opening the door to capitalist influences, and the Yugoslavs resuming their old war-cry against bureaucratic degeneration. Yet under the impression of the Hungarian movement, the leading Yugoslav theorist, Edward Kardelj, went one step further: in his speech to the National Assembly last December, he hinted that the root cause of bureaucratic degeneration was the fusion of a monopoly party with the state machine, which led to excessive belief in the rôle of state power in "building socialism" and prevented understanding of the need to reduce the rôle of the state, and of the fundamental fact that the growth of socialism consists in the development of a new type of relations between human beings. This idea, while profoundly Marxist, is, of course, in fundamental opposition to Leninism, and was at once attacked as such by the Russians.

Moreover, Kardelj had already been guilty of another revision of Leninism, when in his Oslo lecture in 1954 he advanced the view that while revolution and dictatorship were necessary for the victory of socialism in underdeveloped countries, a "reformist" road to socialism had proved successful in advanced countries with democratic traditions; Djilas' own thesis of the character of the Communist revolution as a movement for the forcible

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industrial modernisation of backward countries is, in fact, a development of this official Yugoslav doctrine. When the Soviet leaders first tried to bring the Yugoslav Communists back into their fold, the latter argued on this basis that the elements of socialist progress were by no means confined to the Soviet *bloc*, and that by staying aloof from the *blocs* they were not only serving peace but also doing their socialist duty by "co-existing" with Communists and Social-democrats alike. During the renewal of the Soviet-Yugoslav conflict last winter, the Russian attacked this attitude as a failure to fulfil the requirements of "proletarian internationalism": co-existence was possible with non-socialist forces, but true socialists had to take sides in a common front in the international class struggle.

THIS time, the discussion was abruptly closed by a diplomatic agreement to drop the subject; but that is clearly no solution for the internal needs of the Yugoslav party. Its ideological dilemma has been made even more acute by Khrushchev's unambiguous announcement, *after* his victory over the "old Stalinists," that he is willing to let the Yugoslavs keep their workers' councils but not to imitate them, and that he regards them as a minor detail without importance. Clearly, if the Yugoslavs are to accept closer unity among the ruling Communist parties, in the spirit of the Bucharest communiqué, they would have to abandon their non-Leninist recognition of a "reformist" road to socialism for advanced democratic countries; nor could they, if they are to co-operate "on the basis of Marxism-Leninism," cling to Kardelj's view on the limitations of the state in "building" socialism and on the need to foster instead the growth of socialist relations from below. Yet the view sums up, in an abstract but striking form, the momentum of independent development that the years of reform have given to Yugoslav society—and its contrast to the totalitarianism which still characterises, despite the changes of recent years, the Soviet state under Khrushchev.

Either, then, the momentum of Yugoslav development must be broken at however heavy a cost, or ideological unity with the Soviets cannot be attained. The dilemma faces the party leadership all the more acutely because a party congress—the first since 1952—is impending; according to the original plan, that congress was to adopt a new programme which would lay down the Yugoslav Communists' new ideas in binding form. Unity with the Soviets may be needed as a reinsurance for the party's power—but it can now be attained only by sacrificing not only the country's prosperity and freedom of manœuvre, but the party's own ideological cohesion.

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I HAVE tried in this article to contrast the logic of Djilas' analysis with the facts of Yugoslav life. My conclusion is that Djilas is right in diagnosing an insoluble dilemma between the interests of single-party rule and the dynamics of reform, but that he is wrong in assuming that the conflict was settled once for all in favour of totalitarianism when he was defeated. The concessions, though conceived by the party as temporary, are real concessions; the forces released by the reforms are real forces; even the ideological conflicts in which the party has involved itself are real conflicts. It is right to point to the persistence of the totalitarian tendency, and to the international consequences to which its inherent logic might still lead even at this late day. It seems to me wrong to prophesy the outcome—and most certainly wrong to take it for granted that full-scale totalitarianism could be restored without a bitter struggle.

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William Sansom

The Man with the Moon in Him

A Story

A FULL moon would soon be rising to shed a cool brilliance over our hot, aching summer city.

Somewhere across the night of the world it waited to edge up over the rooftops, first a birth of light in the sky, then a thin gold rump mounting above chimneys swimming towards it, finally the enormous and splendid low-hung lantern itself.

People would stand at open windows and gaze at it, watching it "rise," never thinking that it was instead they who dizzily descended round towards it, themselves forever falling away. Lovers in the parks would stare entranced, feeling its platinum heat burn in their veins, watching its light drip white on the buildings like a warm summer-night snow.

But the moon is not only beautiful, it has other strengths. Its terrible pull alters each month the shape of whole oceans. Millions upon millions of tons of salt wet water go creeping up and down the world as from somewhere, radiant and invisible, it pulls. Just as, like a restless sleep, it pulls at the smaller tides in human veins.

And just as, at five o'clock in the afternoon, long before it rose, still unseen and unknown, it pulled at the veins of a lonely young man in a raincoat deep beneath the earth in the tiled passages of the Underground.

He was alone. He was so alone that he might not have had a name. The name was written down in many registers, on letters and on small bills, and inside the greasy collar of his mud-coloured raincoat, and even on the register of one of Her Majesty's preventive institutions—Les Baynes. But on this summer night, with no girl, no friends, no money and no home, he might neither have had name nor identity. Hundreds of people passed him by but no one noticed him. He might not have been there.

But he was indeed there, and in many ways his presence was more powerful than usual. The moon knew he was there. He was strangely excited and overconscious of himself. He felt strong and daring. He had spent his last three pennies coming down onto the underground platforms here—wisely, wisely, his mind told him.

He stood against the white tiles, by the slot machines and a line of cinema advertisements, on the up-line platform. At this time of the afternoon the platform was fairly empty. Not many people were yet travelling up to the West End. On the other side it was different—those who had left their work early were swelling the down-trains, and a growing swarm of footsteps echoed from the escalator hall. But his side was left empty.

It lay in a separate tunnel. Single people sometimes wandered in and stood apart, facing the big curved advertisements across the line. The suave dark-metal live-rail quietly beckoned from the pit in the centre. But nobody liked to look at this for long—they looked away to left or right or at advertisements. They looked ill at ease: and

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because they were few, they looked also as lonely as he was. He could stand them like that. It was not the same as above, in the streets, where everybody seemed bent on some purposeful, companionable errand, and only he had none.

On the five o'clock empty platform, tiled and hard as a bright lavatory, clean and dry as the inside of a giant porcelain gun-barrel, with the hot smell swerving in from tunnels, with the sound of trains themselves like a blast of thunderous air pushing in from the dark hole at the end—on this platform there stood three people as well as the young man. A painted-up girl in light-coloured clothes, pink angora, a short white skirt, high white shoes under darker stockings. Further on, a man in creased grey, bowlered and sober, with a worn brief-case, a parcel, unpolished shoes. Further still, a negro in a pale suit—in that tubular bluish light looking oddly out of context, like a man in a negative photograph.

The young man in the raincoat—he was Irish-looking, with upstanding oiled black hair, blue eyes rimmed with short dark lashes, a raw red skin that had stepped straight off the bog or out of the pub, either—the young man glanced over these figures, found the men gloomy and innocuous, and fixed his eyes on the girl.

"Tart," he muttered out loud, "Going up West, starting early." Then he saw she carried a small square make-up case. "Strip-tease," he corrected himself.

FROM FAR along the tunnel came the first growling of a train. He had his eyes on the girl. He felt vaguely possessive—there she was private in her clothes who would be publicly naked. His excitement mounted. In the pocket of his coat he gripped something, getting it ready. The two other men stepped back from the platform edge. He looked quickly over his shoulder across the escalator space to the other platform to see if the coast was clear. Sometimes not all the passengers went up the stairs, sometimes someone had passed his station and came through to take the opposite train back, sometimes some idiot bumpkin thought it was a junction and came wandering about looking for somewhere or other. But now it was empty there, no train. Yet perhaps a train was coming in now? Perhaps its noise was covered by the close roar of his own train which he could see surging round the bend of the tunnel, hard, busy, hungry, its red hammer-head bursting out small then suddenly tall as it ranged to a stop along the platform? Like a suddenly tamed beast it stood there shivering its whole long red flank and with a sighing hiss opened empty glass doors.

But no train came in on the other side, and no one got out here.

The girl, the grey-suited man, the negro—all three walked in. The doors closed, the engine gathered itself rattling to a start—and then the whole immense enterprise groaned off, big thing gone suddenly small away in the tunnel hole, and the young man was left alone.

This was his moment. . . .

With a last glance over the other side—still empty—he drew his hand and the pencil-stub from his pocket and swung round on the wall. Gripping the stub hard and awkwardly between finger and thumb, he wrote quickly on the white space of an advertisement a single big-lettered obscene word. His lips moved as he wrote. He wrote quickly, as if he were swallowing down food—and then he heard from over the way the first whisper of another train. He took a risk, reached out and scrawled the word again huge on the next poster, pale pencil-lead among the dark print of film actors' and directors' and distributors' names. "That'll show the bleeders," he lipped, and his mouth hung open greedy as an animal's.

But he was not pitting his strength simply at those film people—he was addressing the whole world, everybody, with their high-sniffing noses and their lifted eyebrows, their restrictions, their society, their No.

As the first people alighted from the train on the other side, he had the pencil-stub back in his pocket, dropping it loose like a sweet, avoiding it guiltily although it was

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deep in his own dark pocket. He sidestepped quickly to the machines and pretended to read what was offered: but then moved away in case someone might think he was tampering with them. He stood on the weighing machine and looked hard at the arrow not registering his weight.

He bubbled hotly inside himself as he heard the people patter off up and away. Perhaps there'd be another chance to do it before the next train came in?

There was. And he went through the whole action several more times, as several more trains came and went—the alert, the attack, success and the sweet secret guilt.

The guilt—and the cleverness. He was up to all the tricks, he knew when there were cleaners about, he could hear the clank of a pail and a mop a hundred feet off as the old girl in dark blue slacks and her pink satin blouse, hair done up tall in a turban like a Brixton-Jamaica mammy, came clacking along on floodhigh heels. And along at each end of the platform those polished wood doors could always hide a supervisor, he was up to that too, he didn't want old grim-face coming asking questions. So he kept a close eye on those doors while he waited for a train to pass. But he always found time to glance back proud at his own work, the pitiful pale lead scrawl among such heavily printed names. It never looked pale or pitiful to him. He only chose the white spaces, where it stood out clear—some old probationer fool had once told him he didn't really want to write the words, he only wanted to make his mark on the space, and so what? If you wanted to write a word you didn't choose a written-on piece, did you? Only this old misery had kept on saying no it was the other way round, you didn't want to write the word at all, you wanted to fill the space and the word was what came to your mind, like people write their names. Well, and so what?

Thinking this, which always got him furious, for when they give you a sensible reason for things, it chips a bit off the pleasure somewhere—he waited for the next train to draw out and then swung sharply round on a poster with a big girl in a low-cut dress glaring her teeth out from a frame of red balloon lips, and he saw enough white space there in the picture of the girl, not on her bosom so carefully shaded but right in her teeth, and he stabbed with the stub at her teeth, and stabbed so hard he lost his grip on the pencil, it shot from his hand, he jerked back to catch it and only hit it hard with his hand like a racket and the stub went flying away through the air to fall on the platform, to roll winking on the dark grey stone surface, to dribble across the white line, and—he saw it with his heart heaved into his mouth—hover wobbling for a second before falling over into the pit. He ran forward after it—then stopped himself just in time, swaying on the edge like a man on a cliff.

The pencil lay down near a purple sweet carton, a piece of oiled rag, a torn newspaper. Its polish winked up at him from the dirt. It lay quite near the platform edge on his side of the first rail. The live-voltage rail was raised a good foot or two off, above the deeper pit. It was his only pencil. Could a man get down there, lie full length, without a train hitting him? Wheels, flanges—safer in the deeper pit like a coffin under the polished steel? But could it be risked—he looked skilfully up and down the platform —between trains?

Chamber-pots, he thought looking at the china insulators, rows of pos, and half-hating, half-loving he giggled. Like many other people he had wondered about this before, in a way desiring it; and now he was already down on one knee on the very edge, on the white line and peering down before his heart began thumping, a shiver of fear emptied the soles of his feet, and he drew back just as a voice boomed hollow along the tiled tube: "Keep away from that line, what's up, lost something?"

A peak-capped figure was hurrying towards him from the end of the platform, but still a long way away, and his clever guiltiness stood him smartly up to wave, shake his head, and stroll carefully at ease off into the

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arch towards the escalator. Once out of sight he ran, and ran right up the escalator so that when the official reached the bottom he was well out of reach and call.

At the top he gave up his ticket—wondering for a moment whether he could claim his twopence back. But now he was too excited. He saw freedom ahead in the sunlit archway. And gloating on what he had done and on the narrowness of escape, he hurried out from the smell of tiles and stale air into the summer evening.

But round the first corner he stopped. He felt the let-down coming on. The evening air was stale as the tube. He had a muffling and swelling in his head like a hang-over. A big emptiness bit inside like a drinker's wish for more drink and his hands scratched at the emptiness in his pockets. It was a small thing gone, a mean stub of wood and lead. But it was irreplaceable. And it would be absolutely impossible to get a pencil for nothing in the whole length of that busy street. In everybody's pocket and purse there were pencils. Pencils no one would give a second thought to. Yet there was no legitimate way of getting these pencils away from people. You might borrow one, pretend to need to make a note, stop a passer-by—but the owner of that negligible length of wood and graphite would stand waiting. The post offices had only pens. The pencils in the employment exchange were chained. You might borrow a pencil from someone and run—but that was asking for trouble. And he hated trouble, or more deeply, he feared trouble, feared even effort and risk of any kind; it was indeed this fear of facing things that had conditioned him into secret and sideways ways, into peering through windows, into writing secretly on walls. In the smallest matters, he avoided a straight approach. He hated facing eyes. With girls, for instance, he found difficulty in going through with the ordinary bantering approach. His secret thoughts were too big to let him face their eyes.

The feeling of great pity for himself came on, he was near to tears as he stood and watched the people pass, all with somewhere to go, something to do—all seeming to have come to terms with the evening. Only himself in all the world left out. The sun was falling towards six o'clock—still high, but past its prime of afternoon, it cast a lost and weary light over the street of buses and vans and cars and people. At this point before evening things seemed to have lost their sparkle, it was an in-between time, it echoed back the old days when it was time to leave the dazzling play streets and go to wash before supper, when the smell of dust and asphalt was still sweet but somehow used up, tired as his tired feet.

He stood there empty as this empty time of day. He yearned for even an hour ago, as if this were all the past. He put all the blame on that pencil. He looked up the street, at the mixed red and brown and concrete-grey buildings, at all the mess of wire and lamps and poster, at the traffic and the Odeon and the red Woolworth's and turned away, it all looked so sour and stale, the well-known dull buildings and the street of people. He turned and walked in the other direction to where the Common, yellow with clay and scrubbed with gorse, straggled right down to the pavement. He walked up a path between gorse bushes to where a thicket of may-trees huddled together to make a paper-strewn urban grove.

The sounds of summer traffic came singing, a confused music like the metal echo of water-pipes. Through the dusty leaves he saw the far blue sky. He stood there not knowing what to do—craving to do something. Although it was so warm that the underbush smelled—of dead grass and metal, and dust, and petrol—nevertheless he still wore that raincoat, hot and sweatsour, damp beneath the arms. It was a kind of protection, an anonymity. He stood and looked down at an old white and blue-rimmed jug, patched with rusted iron where the enamel had chipped. He kicked it over. It made no sound. The earth was too dull even to bring a ring from an old tin. He turned and walked away. The heat in his head ached, he felt he could break inside for excitement.

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But excitement for what? He was surrounded only by the dead desolate Common, by the suburb pretending to live.

Houses were built right up against the edge of the Common here. He walked down the hard clay path, ridged with old rain rivulets, to where the dung-brown brick garden walls rose. He stood in the shadow of a tree and looked up at the windows. Perhaps some girl back from the office was changing for the evening, for the dance. He heard the sound of plates being washed. A radio talked out the news, wide and loud, like the voice of a man in a huge hall. Lace curtains, blackness between, faced him over the roof of a shed. Slate roofs above: and above them, that vague yearning of a sky. It was all pitilessly still.

THE SUN somewhere behind him fired into bright gold one of the closed glass windows. Jewel-bright, sadly westering, it threw into emphasis all the tired brick around. The housebacks rose in a grim terrace against the blue above—never, never would they move, they were set in their etched dull check of brick like dead houses buried in a steel engraving, they grated with a despair of the past, and something in the sight of them pulled harder at that man's inside already pulled by the moon, something which set the craving higher than ever. But a craving for what? He did not know. So it became a girl.

He turned away and walked down the slight slope back to the High Street. The suburban pall faced him—just enough brightness in the new shops, in two cinemas, in a fried fish shop and a restaurant and two large corner licensed houses and a radio shop flickering silent television screens, just enough brightness in all this to tempt—but so many miles away from the West End where these things were set packed tight together, street after street, satisfying, available.

A group of young men were strolling by, special hair-cuts, white shirts, boasting suits. They talked loudly, impressing each other. They were less intent on looking for a girl than on impressing themselves on the world, on stirring things up. In this they looked dangerous. But they were in control. They were not like Baynes, edging by dull against their brightness, a mud-coloured shadow of a man with the moon in him.

He glanced up shiftily as they went by, waited for them to pass before he spat. Then he saw the tail of a queue outside the fish shop—and a pair of red high heels.

As his eyes saw them his feet went forward, he was cutting along the pavement to stand in the queue exactly behind this woman with the shoes, his chin a few inches only from the rolled back of her hair. He smelled her scent, the soapy scent of an English bedroom, mixed with the summer scent of her, warm girl, yearning out to him.

The queue shuffled forward. He kept close behind. People now pressed close against his back—but he kept back away from the girl, so conscious of her that to touch would have seemed designed and if she turned to make some simple complaint, "Don't push," he might panic with guilt. So he kept back.

Yet she knew. His breath, his breathing? Or just his presence, his hot mind penetrating the back of her head? Once she turned round, glanced quickly up—and in that glance perhaps saw only health in his red face and thick black upstanding hair, for a second later her hand came up to the back of her hair to put it straight. He noticed on one white finger, young and thin and innocent, a meagre ring with a cheap and very small false gem: it looked pitifully cheap, humble: he wanted to smash it.

People came out with fish wrapped in paper, and now nearly inside the shop the smell of fry overcame the girl's scent and with this some of her presence went, he woke up to the fact that he was in a queue and penniless. He read No Plaice To-night on a blackboard and saw he could ask for this when his turn came. But they might have one portion left? They might keep him hanging there waiting while they looked for it and the girl escaped? He stepped from the queue, pretending to shake his head regretfully at the notice, and left the shop. Next

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door was a photographer's. He stood looking at photographs of wedding groups, brushed-up grooms with touched-up faces, and brides who had lost their figures in big white wedding dresses as if anticipating what was to come—bright pathetic couples enjoying their moment before the years of toil and words, but now to Baynes simply pictures of people who had banded together, who were on the side of order and restraint and all the social niceties that said No. He swore at them, just moving his wet lips, and kept a sideways eye on the fish-shop.

The girl came out and turned his way. His insides paled. He thought she was going to speak to him but she went past. He turned to walk casually after her. Now he kept near in by the shop windows. He kept his head down—but his eyes were still on her, looking up under the lids like dead eyes. She walked not fast but with decision, in the centre of the pavement, the set of her heels jolting her whole body busily.

She rounded the last shop in the line and turned up onto the common. His mouth fell open with surprise.

She was walking exactly where he had come from! He gasped at the coincidence of this. It was commanded, it was fate—and with the certainty that superstition brings he hurried faster after her, seeing clearly the grove of dark may-trees higher up through which she must pass.

AT THAT time of day there were few people on the Common. People coming home from work took the main asphalted path away to the right: and it was yet too early for evening strollers to walk out on this quieter path, a kind of lovers' lane, that ran along near the row of high garden walls. Yet everywhere the signs of trampling humanity were scattered—initials chalked on the walls, a scattering of cigarette cartons and whole sheets of blown newspaper, and this litter gave the place a more deserted look. A great crowd had come and gone and would never come back.

He was beginning to breathe fast. He took care to walk away from the path, taking a roundabout way over the grass. He had thus to walk twice as fast, on that warm evening with his raincoat stale and muffling its own rubber heat round him. He could only see the girl's back. Of this, what he saw markedly was the waist, slender between shoulders and hips, the place where she might snap—and then also he saw the slightly bent forward set of her shoulders, not broad, but young and weak, so that they seemed in their thin fragility to call for protection, and at the same time for its opposite, hurting and crushing.

She disappeared behind a straggle of bush growing higher towards the may-grove. He took a last quick look round. He saw from a long way off a man standing and possibly watching him—but this only aggravated, made him act with greater speed, so that now breaking into a run but quiet, quiet on his toes, bending low on long knees, he passed after her into the earth-smelling shadow of the may.

Tangled, disordered, shapeless, those trees nevertheless cut out the day, they made a place of shade privately their own. It was quiet inside, quiet as the dead smell of last year's sodden autumn's leaves and the silent ring of that rusted, mud-bedded enamel jug.

He leaped at her from behind clutching with both arms, swinging her round to face him. She made no sound but for a little sob deep inside her open mouth. The fish in its newspaper fell squashed between them. He butted her face up with his chin and looked close into her eyes.

They stared up at him neither frightened nor furious nor even surprised—they stared up unresisting, soft eyes looking a long way into him and beyond.

Her mouth had fallen a little open, she seemed to be pressing herself against him, giving to him. He swung out one arm from her shoulder to hit her in the face, to blot out her eyes. She stared up at him with the innocence of a child about to be struck—when the child has trusted yet faces a sudden wind of anger, and is all wonder at this, held at ease in a moment of suspended curiosity, but not detached, rather in some way most

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attached with all the strange love of victim for assailant.

His hands dropped to his sides. All he had wanted had fallen flat into soft pulp. How to impress himself on what was soft and unresisting? On what would not wrestle itself away from his strength? On what in fact had ceased to be there at all . . . ?

He was suddenly jolted aware of the real fact of standing with a girl in his arms in a straggle of trees, and realized now that it was her bag she was pressing at him, and from her lips there was indeed a word coming:

"Take . . . take . . ."

He did not know what to do or to say and pulled from the cloud of his mind the first thing that came to it:

"A pencil . . . could you please lend me . . . a pencil?" before she fell, in a dead faint, to the ground.

The Fox

It was twenty years ago I saw the fox
Gliding along the edge of prickling corn,
A nefarious shadow
Between the emerald field and bristling hedge,
On velvet feet he went.

The wind was kind, withheld from him my scent
Till my threaded gaze unmasked him standing there,
The colour of last year's beech leaves, pointed black,
Poised, uncertain, quivering nose aware
Of danger throbbing through each licking leaf.
One foot uplifted, balanced on the brink
Of perennial fear, the hunter hunted stood.

I heard no alien stir in the friendly wood,
But the fox's sculpted attitude was tense
With scenting, listening, with a seventh sense
Flaring to the alert; I heard no sound
Threaten the morning; and followed his amber stare,
But in that hair-breadth moment, that flick of the eye,
He vanished.

And now, whenever I hear the expectant cry
Of hounds on the empty air,
I look to a gap in the hedge and see him there
Filling the space with fear; the trembling leaves
Are frozen in his stillness till I hear
His leashed up breathing—how the stretch of time
Contracts within the flash of recreation!

Phoebe Hesketh

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Bertrand de Jouvenel

Asia is not Russia

or America, either

"AWAY with Arcadia, give me Pittsburgh!" Thus sayeth modern man: his Promised Land does not flow with milk and honey but is overhung with patches of smog; his cornucopia is the vat from which there flows a glistening flow of steel; his hero therefore may well be the man who took his name from steel and devoted his reign to the increase and multiplication of steel: Stalin. Industrialisation is the obsessive thought of Asians, especially. Was it not the Industrial Revolution which caused the striking disparity in power and welfare between Western and Asian countries? Is it not therefore an Industrial Revolution which is called for to restore a balance of power and to catch up with Western standards of life? It is, of course, entirely natural that Asians should regard their building of factories as proclaiming their rightful importance in the world. How would we Europeans feel if we faced modern America with economies arrested at the 18th-century stage, though with a greatly increased population?

If all nations are conceived as climbing towards industrial achievement, the short and steep cut is surely most tempting to those whose lag is greatest. The Stalinist way *is* such a short cut, not because it is socialist but because it is despotic. Despotism is eminently capable of channelling national energies into the building of productive assets, and of seeing to it that such productive assets are used to sire succeeding generations of productive assets instead of bearing fruit in the form of consumer goods. This process surely cannot go on for too long a time but it has endured (and been endured) in Russia for a generation.

In April, an international conference on economic growth and social development was held in Tokyo, under the sponsorship of the Congress for Cultural Freedom. The twenty-six delegates who assembled were composed almost equally of Western and Asian economists. Among them were: The Conference Chairman, W. Arthur Lewis; Colin Clark; M. L. Dantwala of the University of Bombay; Amlan Datta of the University of Calcutta; Asoka Mehta, leader of the Praja Socialist Party of India; D. R. Gadgil, director of the Gokhale Institute of Political Science at Poona; Das Gupta, head of the economics department of the University of Ceylon; Takeyasu Kimura of the University of Tokyo; Ichiro Nakayama, president of Hitotsubashi University in Tokyo; Saburo Okita of Japan's Economic Planning Board; D. Sumitro, former finance minister of Indonesia; M. L. Qureshi, chief economist of Pakistan's Planning Board; Tun Thin of the University of Rangoon; Ayo Ogunsheye of University College, Ibadan, Nigeria; Edward Shils of the University of Chicago; Abram Bergson of Harvard University; and Rudolf Bicanic, director of the research institute in planning at the University of Zagreb, Yugoslavia.

M. Bertrand de Jouvenel, who here reports on this conference, is well known to English readers for his books (Power: The Natural History of its Growth *and* Problems of Socialist England), *as well as for his frequent contributions to the English press. His new book,* Sovereignty, *has just been published by the Cambridge University Press.*

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In their circumstances, Asian intellectuals must rationally set more value than their Western counterparts upon speed of ascent. The very fact that this value does not itself command their adhesion to Stalinist methods testifies to the very high value they set upon respecting the freedom and considering the welfare of their fellow-men. Indeed, the Western economists who were privileged to meet their Asian colleagues at Tokyo were enormously impressed by their admirable reluctance to regard men as mere "factors of production" expendable for the attainment of ambitious objectives. However, this reluctance is based on cogent economic, as well as humanitarian grounds. For Asia is not Russia....

The Food Problem

STALIN proposed to reproduce in a very short time* the physical apparatus of the United States.† In pursuit of this purpose, non-agricultural man-power was multiplied almost five-fold in thirty years, and the State's efforts were directed primarily towards the construction of the basic productive apparatus. As a consequence of this priority, the supply of some major consumer services did not grow apace with the population of towns: lodging space per head shrank; further, the availability of industrial consumer goods did not grow at a pace that would afford the peasants a proper incentive for the delivery of the food supplies expected from them.

Obviously the swelling of towns from the ranks of the peasants calls for increasing deliveries of food from the remaining peasants. Such increases can be hampered by two causes (with no clear demarcation line): the inability, or the unwillingness, of the peasants. In Russia the peasants were regimented and bidden to deliver stated quantities of food at deplorably bad terms of trade; thus unwillingness was fostered, and the food situation was never good—at times was very bad. This evil, however, could easily be remedied: all that was necessary was some unbending towards the peasants, which has occurred from time to time (with an alternation of tightening up). Unbending suffices to improve the situation in Russia, because of Russia's extraordinary resources in land. There can be no *physical* difficulty in feeding a population less than five times as great as the French from agricultural land more than ten times as large.

Asian countries have nothing like this basic asset: for instance, the agricultural area of India works out per inhabitant at only 22 per cent. of the Russian. There was no question of food difficulties in Russia before 1914; and the difficulties which arose in the course of industrial development need not have arisen but for mismanagement by the authorities. The situation is entirely different in the case of Asian countries: they start out with a chronic condition of food deficiency. Food scarcity is the striking tragic feature of Asian life, prevalent in the countryside as well as in the towns. It therefore commands the immediate attention of the welfare-minded. But it also positively constrains the path of industrial development, even if one were willing to pursue the building-up of industry without any concern for present welfare.

Most economists feel that, in Asia, a good deal of man-power can be removed from the land, in successive slices, for induction into industrial and kindred employment, without any fall in the overall supply of food. It is however more doubtful that the migrants

* Fifteen years and even as little as eight were the periods first named. Cf. *The Soviet Economy: A Discussion*, published by Martin Secker & Warburg for the Congress for Cultural Freedom, 1956. Pp. 51–52.

† At first one does not understand why a socialist country should need an equal and identical apparatus to that which has grown up in a capitalist country in response to the needs of a capitalistic society. This however is consonant with the Marxian postulate of linear development: the physical foundations necessary for the reign of socialism are those which have been laid in the capitalist era. Further, it is a Marxian theorem that socialism shall eventuate in the most advanced country since it is the very achievement of capitalism which allows socialist distribution. It may therefore seem that the country which has gone socialist "against the rules of History" must fit itself for the part by reaching and over-stepping the degree of development of the most advanced capitalist country. But perhaps the mere preoccupation with national strength was more operative than any of these doctrinaire considerations.

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will be followed into town by the food they previously consumed on the land. Peasant income is so low per head that the peasants may well avail themselves of some slight decline in their number for a corresponding increase in their individual consumption. Indeed there are economists who argue that in many cases capacity to work is so hampered by inadequate nourishment that an increase in the food consumption of peasants is a condition of an increase in their production per head.* Even without adopting this extreme view, one must admit that more consumption of food is tempting to the peasant, compared with sending it to the towns, and that therefore the conditions of the latter are: (1) the offer by the towns of a tempting counterpart for the food; (2) a sharp rise in food production per agricultural worker.

The first condition implies that the towns must offer consumer-goods and therefore that industry should not be biased too far in favour of producer-goods. The second condition implies that peasants should be helped to achieve more, mainly by the provision of a dense network of rural development stations.

Landlordism is a great curse of overpopulated rural areas. Throughout South-East Asia, the prevailing rent is 50 per cent of the tenant's product: a fantastically high share, but one which is easily explained. In view of the smallness of the plots they work, peasant families always have some surplus labour available and it is profitable for them to apply this labour to some supplementary land even though their share of the product seems to us very low. Landlordism is doubtless a social evil, but the landlord performs an economic function: he draws away to the towns his share of the agricultural proceeds and thereby supports the urban industries. If he is suppressed, his rôle must be taken over, as far as it is a physical rôle by co-operatives, and as far as it is a financial rôle by taxation.

In Asian countries there is no case at all for the *kolkhoz* or any other form of large-scale food-producing units. Extensive cultivation has been basic to Western economic progress. Affording a very high production of food per agricultural worker, it caused the cheapening of food in terms of human labour. But comparatively little labour sufficed to feed the Western population because a great deal of land was available for the purpose. Efficiency is always relative to the scarcest factor: in Asia land is scarce, and extensive farming would be wasteful, since that procedure would get from a given agricultural area less food than can be obtained by labour-intensive methods of cultivation.

But where circumstances dictate intensive cultivation, there is no other adequate production unit than the family. The family constitutes a mass of man-power, much of which will be put out of commission in any form of commercial organisation, and which is here brought to bear without any accounting of effort: any surplus effort is worthwhile that brings some surplus product, however small. Of course this effort can be conducted with greater or less ability. In Japan the achievement is amazing. The Japanese farm is tended with such care and intelligence as to offer at the same time an almost unbelievable economic result and a very nice sight. The average farm has less than 6 acres, is owned by a family of more than 6, and its production provides for the food consumption of 13 Japanese. Such an achievement, encouraged by private ownership, helped by rural extension stations, owing much to widespread application of biological research, obviously offers a model for other countries undergoing demographic pressure.

Agriculture and Industry

It is not by chance that the Asian country the most advanced in agriculture (and, in intensive agriculture, the most advanced in the world), is also the leading country in Asian industry. Japan can afford to have more than five-eighths of its working force in non-agricultural employments because its farms produce, over and above the food consumed on the land, a large surplus available for the non-farm population. In the case of Japan, however, whose agricultural area is

* Harvey Leibenstein: "The Theory of Underemployment in Backward Economies," *Journal of Political Economy*, April, 1957.

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only one-third that of the United Kingdom, food imports must intervene, though in a much smaller proportion than in the case of the U.K. To pay for such imports it is necessary that the industry should be at least in part export-biased.

This rounds off the picture of the constraints set upon industrial development by the fact of food scarcity. This fact determines the granting of priority to the increase in food production, which calls for "servicing" of agriculture by the developing of industries (chemicals, tools, etc.), and it commands attention to the means whereby food can be attracted to the towns: a combination of the offer of consumer goods and of taxation. Moreover, industry which is already called upon to service agriculture and to provide incentives to peasants must also supplement its achievements by turning to export in search of foreign food. All this means a course of industrial development different from that of Russia.

Public Works

WHERE land is scarce, it is obviously good policy to "make" or improve land, and therefore there is a high priority for land development and irrigation schemes. But, also, where it is proposed to foster industrial development, transport facilities must be afforded, if only to ensure that the food surplus can be drained. Trunk railway lines are not enough: the lack of secondary lines or roads to feed the main artery makes the collection very costly and difficult. (Professor Colin Clark has strikingly expressed the cost of carrying grain in terms of grain itself.) It is therefore clear that a condition of a sufficiency of food in the industrial centres is the development of an adequate transport system —a very costly undertaking, and one which pays off, in economic terms, only slowly.

Moreover, an adequate transport system is necessary to ensure some decentralisation of industrial activities. The East has quite a number of demographic equivalents of Greater London: it lacks Birmingham, Sheffield, and other such. It was stressed at the Tokyo Conference, mainly by Bertram Hoselitz and Alessandro Molinari, that the cost of affording proper facilities to an urban population is, per head, an increasing function of the size of the agglomeration. It was also pointed out that the piling up of population in monstrous towns without a sprinkling of intermediary towns about the countryside tends to cause a sharp political division betwen two populations whose ways of life contrast starkly.

The cost of creating transport facilities is very great and must of course be assumed by the authorities. These and other responsibilities incumbent upon them justify a high rate of taxation, and it was the feeling at Tokyo that governments which are chary of taxing enough thereby slow up development. India was cited in this respect by Professor Arthur Lewis.

Social Policy

IF THE government of an "underdeveloped" country is justified in taxing heavily, it does not follow that its taxation policy should now be addressed to the redistributive ends pursued in the West. While no respect should be shown to incomes of pre-industrial origin (those of landowners, for instance), profits on the other hand should be smiled upon, not mainly for their incentive value but because they provide the main source of capital investment. Opinions vary as to the proper line of demarcation between the field of activity to be assumed by the authorities and that left to private enterprise: but whatever the latter, within this field what Shackle calls "the focus-gain" must be high. However, this should be thought of as applying to industrial entrepreneurship, which is too rare in South-East Asia, rather than to commercial entrepreneurship from which there must be some weaning away.

In respect of wages, one should think of their progress in terms of an increasing number of men employed at a given wage-rate rather than in terms of increasing wage-rates. However poor their wage, the first to have obtained industrial employment are certainly far better off than the unemployed or those who subsist in disguised unemployment

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as hangers-on of the joint family. Therefore what should be deemed important for general welfare is the pace at which the latter are raised to the position of the former, not the improvement in the condition of the former. This, however, runs counter to the interest of those presently employed, and indeed to what Asian trade-unionists have learnt from their Western colleagues, whose main concern is to push up wage-rates. That this attitude of the Western unions is linked to conditions of full-employment which are very far indeed from being reached in the East is a fact of which Eastern unionists are aware. But it is a lot to ask from them, especially in the face of high profits, that they should abstain from making claims for their members, in the interests of others from whom they have no mandate. The whole subject of trade-union policy in Asian conditions was reviewed in a masterly manner at Tokyo by the Indian Socialist, Asoka Mehta, leaving us with the impression that Eastern union leaders have to be very responsible men indeed.

Education

"WHAT IS the place of education in a development scheme? How much education and of what kind, can be regarded as an input required for economic growth, and therefore as a productive investment? And should not any greater quantity or different variety of education be regarded as an output, a form of consumer goods to be placed in the balance as against other consumer goods?" These questions were asked at the Tokyo conference and aroused a storm.

They were, of course, entirely legitimate questions in the context of economics, which postulates a sharp dichotomy between production, the realm of efficiency, and consumption, the realm of preferences. From the point of view of production, it is economically unsound to increase the resources applied to education beyond the point at which any further increase of such application would yield a lesser contribution to production than some other uses of this increment of resources. From the point of view of consumption, the amount of education is a matter either for consumers choosing individually or for the government choosing in their stead. Moreover "productive" education should be efficiency-oriented, and "consumptive" education preference-oriented.

It was significant that a gathering of economists drawn from four continents reacted in unanimous horror at this inscription of education within the context of the economic process. All felt that education is not to be thought of as a producer's tool or a consumer's delight, but as something which happens to man as a whole: in Cicero's words, an educated man is more truly a man. Obviously a society of educated men will not only be more skilful in the satisfaction of its desires than another, but—a more important point—its hierarchy of desires would be very different.

And this conjures up a fascinating picture. The economy of the West acquired a rapidly increasing power to satisfy desires in the 19th century, when popular education was at a specially low point, with the Church moved out of that office while the State had not yet moved in. Moreover, the models of consumption offered to the people by "their betters" happened at that time to be the least graceful and the least tasteful ever seen. Was the coincidence of economic development with a Dark Age of style and education a necessary or an accidental correlation? And if the latter, is it not perhaps because of this accident that the way of life of the richest nations of the West is so lacking in style? If a high priority is given to education at the very outset of development, and if behavioural models are set by a dominant class of intellectuals, is it not conceivable that—in a different setting—economic development may result in a better way of life than we have contrived?

It is indeed conceivable, but not very probable: the impact of Western models upon the East is a very strong one and the imitation effect very apparent. However, the granting of a very high priority to education may have important results. Of course it poses the problem, as yet clearly unsolved, of a reconciliation between traditional learning

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and modern instruction; unfortunately, in the East, it seems that this reconciliation may fail to be achieved in perhaps even a more signal degree than in our own case.

National poverty may be thought to be an insurmountable obstacle to a great education effort. The example of Japan testifies that it is not so. Education is the pervading theme of Japanese life: youth is thought of as a time to learn, and retirement as an opportunity to learn. Conversations seem to resolve around what is to be learned (not taught) and how to learn it. The most vivid image in my mind is that of school children surrounding their young mistress in front of a Nara temple and listening to her explanations, I mean listening, not gaping or giggling or scraping their feet. And more and more came into the close, marching in columns behind their teachers. They were disgorged from shining buses which had brought them from distant places. The great trooping of school children in the Imperial park was a sort of symbol of the Japanese educational effort.

The American Standard of Life?

IN THE West, so called "under-developed countries" have become over the last years, the subject of a good deal of popular literature, including of course the pronouncements of politicians. Such literature makes ample use of quite unscientific comparisons of the various national incomes per head in dollars, thereby placing the nations of the world on a ladder of increasing income per head, with India on the bottom rung and the U.S. at the top. It goes on to assume that by successive steps the "under-developed countries" will rise to the American standard of life.

This is a mistaken view of things and one which would be gravely misleading, applied to Asian countries. There is no inherent obstacle to the duplication of the American manner of life in Russia or in Africa south of the Sahara: there *is* such an obstacle in Asia. The American economy is uniquely efficient in terms of human labour: but it is also uniquely wasteful in terms of natural resources. American procedures reflect the conditions under which American civilisation arose: a mere handful of men, in a huge land, commanded apparently limitless resources, which therefore they had no reason to husband. Everything was abundant but human labour, and thus nothing was of value and worth economising other than human labour. The use made of land, already alluded to, reflects this peculiar situation; but so does every feature of American life. The American motor-car may be used as a symbol: this greedy monster consumes at least three times the amount of gas required for the service it performs. Therefore it is clearly out of place in a country which must earn its oil by painfully-achieved exports. If this were the type of car adopted in such a country, the motor transport facilities on which that country could afford to spend foreign exchange, would be cut down by two-thirds, as against what they would be if the type adopted were the sober one. There are, obviously, many features of American life which are unsuitable to the conditions of resource-poor countries. And they are unsuitable not because of the present condition of poverty but because of the permanent context: if the reproduction of such features were sought, it would interfere with the achievement of welfare.

To put this thought in a provocative manner: one should not think of a space of time within which Asian nations shall attain the American standard of life. They will never attain it. Which does not mean that they shall not attain an equivalent standard of life—but very different in kind. They would only be hampered in the pursuit of this equivalence if they were obsessed by a pursuit of identity.

One of the first impressions of a Westerner in the East is of the weight of objects in general: they are so much lighter in the East. And this suggests a conclusion: the good life there must be weaved out of less material than in the West. The gentleness and respect with which natural material is regarded and treated in the Orient testifies to a deep intuitive insight.

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Dom Moraes

A MAN DREAMING

I

Waking too early, in an icy bed,
Four-posted, with brass cupids perched in place,
He moved a little, and lolled up his head,
Mouth slowly puckering to a sad grimace,
From pillows white and flabby as his face.

This man, awash in sleep, had tossed all night,
Dreaming that in a meadow rough with stubble
Some strangers with long cloaks had come in sight:
Angels, whose faces showed no human trouble.
Stilt-legged and grave, each was the other's double.

Their eyes reflected light, as mirrors do,
Yet, while he blinked, he listened: like a stream
Rising through flanks of mountains from below
Their unchanging plainsong rose, filling his dream.
Then one, tall and ungainly, stooped to him.

The angel took him up in hands of fire,
Plying wings above him like a giant dove,
Till he, grown gentle and beyond desire,
Locked in his tower of bones, yet still alive,
Through terror and the fire came to love.

And so, when floated to the longed-for chamber,
To him his coming there seemed mad and late.
He could not bear to lose the holy stranger
And pleaded that he stay, and alter fate,
Outstretching hands to one who could not wait.

The wine that he was offered cooled in snow,
His lips refused, although a lifetime thirsty.
Once he had longed for conquests: women now
Were led toward his bed, never more easy.
He was prevented by his wound, his misery.

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And then he knew his dream for what it was.
At once a sexual panic swamped all pain.
An angry spasm shook him. Then he woke.
He caught his breath and rearranged his brain:
But took some time to know himself again.

II

He thought of angels as he ate his breakfast,
And thought of other whorers after vision.
The cups and saucers of his small repast
Sat glistening on the table in derision.
The lost self of his dream, restored, was cast
Through fresh awareness to an easter passion,

Not really passion, but a grave compassion
That hurt like something frozen in his body,
Awaiting sunlight and a thaw; compassion,
Which brings us all in time to misery.
Later he raised his eyes, and through the window
He saw a bald blue sky, and the quiet sea.

O, with the gentlest gesture known, could the waves
Drown all his life, and he be drawn through silence
Down in the light-slashed tissue of a wave
Under the driven ships and tree-spiked islands
To eddy like a flame into a grave
The octopus explores in smoking silence—

Then light rained down on him; the vision ended;
And like a saint he felt the crown that stings
Drawn from his brow. Injustice was amended.
But he, the dreamer who had known all things,
Could not remember why, or who'd descended
From the December sky, with folded wings.

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FROM THE OTHER SHORE

ITEMS:—During his press-conference, Ilya Ehrenburg expressed the opinion to Polish journalists that there were two fields in which the state should not interfere: gastronomy and literature.... "Catching up with America" department: a new feature in the East German periodical, *Das Neue Leben*, is a "thriller" to be published in one hundred and fifty-seven (157) instalments. Since the periodical appears fortnightly, six years from now the readers will learn "who done it...." The Institute of Marxism-Leninism is to publish eight supplementary volumes to the fourth edition of Lenin's *Collected Works*. Vol. XXXVI has now appeared and includes Lenin's "Testament" and various other previously suppressed writings.... The first number of the Polish quarterly, *Opinions*, devoted to Soviet culture, consists almost entirely of the works of formerly or recently anathematised Russian writers: poems by Boris Pasternak, Osip Mandelstam, and Marina Tsvetaeva; a piece by Isaac Babel; and two stories, recently condemned, by young contemporary Soviet writers: "Levers" by A. Yashin, and "Light in the Window" by I. Nagibin. There are also excerpts, translated from the manuscript, of Pasternak's novel, *Doctor Zhivago*, which so far has been refused publication in the Soviet Union.... *The Times'* correspondent in Prague reports this definition of "socialist realism" given by the Czech comedian Jan Werich in reply to a question about modern painting: "An impressionist is a fellow who paints the way he sees, an expressionist the way he feels, and a socialist-realist the way he hears...." During the beauty contest for the title of Miss Poland, one of the organisers—in the course of explaining the principles governing the contest—drily told a Western correspondent: "The whole thing is run on Western lines though we have some doubts as to the democratic character of the system. We can elect only one Miss Poland but we have 23 candidates. To make this really democratic we ought to have only one candidate as in most other elections in this part of the world."

*

A NEW category of "problem-youngsters" has been described by Lev Kassil in the *Literaturnaya Gazetta* (May 25, 1957). They are neither juvenile delinquents (*hooligani*) nor the Soviet counterpart of Teddy-boys (*stilyagi*) who congregate in Moscow's Gorki Street (renamed by them Broadway). They have been christened *nibonicho*, which is short for "neither God nor Devil." They are the young men who do not look back in anger—or forward—but look around and sneer instead. Kassil writes that they are "egotists and grabbers, home-made nihilists who eagerly join in any discussion where... they can interrupt the speaker with a churlish remark." Outwardly they do not strike the eye: they neither wear ultra-long jackets nor ultra-short trousers. They are modestly dressed and their haircut is not over-elaborate. Apart from their "nihilism," they specialise in heckling. Kassil explains that when, at public meetings, the speaker has worked himself up to a high pitch of eloquence, he is often interrupted by shouts of "Stormy applause, all rise"—the formula invariably used in all reports of the speeches of Soviet leaders.

*

THE mood of the young Polish intellectuals (described by George Watson in the last number of ENCOUNTER) has also been noted by a Polish commentator: "A spectre haunts Poland, the spectre of existentialism!" But non-intellectual youth presents no less of a problem. In Poland this "embarrassing" question is now being openly discussed in the press. Juvenile delinquency is rampant; and a documentary film, *Paragraph Zero*, has been made on the problem of prostitution. A young sociologist, S. Manturzewski, who spent three years investigating hooliganism among youth, can find no Marxist explanation for all this. He writes:

"The problem is very puzzling indeed. I have recently visited two Silesian towns. Hooliganism abounds in both: in the first because of unemployment, in the second because of shortage of labour. In the first, gangs of unemployed rove the town, break the lamp-posts, sell cinema tickets on the black market, make use of coshes, and so on. Sodom and Gomorrah. In the second town—where there is a shortage of labour—the young know that they are indispensable. They drink vodka during working hours, break the lamp-posts, make use of coshes—Sodom and Gomorrah.... In Warsaw there are slum areas where hooliganism thrives because children of poor and overworked parents ramble around and educate themselves in the streets; they destroy sign-boards, break the lamp-posts, etc., etc. At the same time in one of the luxury areas of Warsaw another gang composed of the sons of

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high officials (among them sons of two deputy ministers) engages every evening in *beating up men with moustaches!*" [author's italics].

Some time ago the Russian press also reported cases involving the sons of ministers in which some of the delinquents indulged in such strange procedures as insisting, after their arrest, on answering questions in Latin or calling Russian towns by their pre-revolutionary names.

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FILM NOTES:—After many years, *Road to life*, the famous film on juvenile delinquency by Ekk, has reappeared on Soviet screens with a new script, direction, and cast. "Audiences flocked to see *Road to life* and passed with indifference theatres unsuccessfully advertising the new films: *When nightingales sing, In pursuit of fame*, and *Here we live....*" (N. Ignatyeva, *Komsomolskaia Pravda*, June 2, 1957.)

Another sign of revival of interest in the early Soviet cinema is the proposal by G. Alexandrov and E. Tisse to resume work on Eisenstein's unfinished film *Que viva Mexico!* Alexandrov was the assistant-director and Tisse the camera-man on the original film. Because of a disagreement with the sponsors of the film, its unfinished copy remained in the West where several shorter films were made from it, including *Time under the Sun* by Mary Seton. Alexandrov dismisses this as "an unconnected collection of separate pieces," and adds: "It would be fruitless to return after a quarter of a century to the old dispute about who is responsible for the fact that the work remained unfinished.... It is more important to find ways of finishing it.... It should at least be edited as a whole and turned into the work of art contemplated by the group led by S. M. Eisenstein twenty-five years ago.... We must hope that this proposal will have the support of all cinema-lovers in the United States and that the legitimate authors of the film will be given the possibility of getting the unedited copy." (*Isskustvo Kino*, No. 5, 1957.)

For the Film Festival to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the October Revolution, S. Gerasimov is making a film based on Sholokhov's *Quiet Flows the Don*. Another film to be made for the Festival is the screen version of Alexei Tolstoy's novel on the Civil War, *Road to Calvary*: the producer, G. Roshal, has described it as "an inspired story of the emergence of the Soviet intelligentsia."

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THE American sociologist, Professor C. Wright Mills, author of *The Power Elite*, and an unreconstructed radical in the old (pre-Communist) tradition, has written a special article, "The Structure of Power in American Society," for a Polish weekly. His conclusion is: "The top stratum of contemporary American society is becoming more and more homogeneous, more and more consciously co-ordinated. An élite has emerged whose power is probably greater than that of any other small group in history." (*Przeglad Kulturalny*, July 31, 1957.) But a reviewer of *The Power Elite*, which has been translated into Polish, is less pessimistic. He maintains that there is a "thaw" in America and informs his readers that "the fact itself of the publication of Mills' book in the United States is a significant event. During the past decade no book of this character could have appeared in print." (S. Arski, The Power Elite, *Przeglad Kulturalny*, July 17, 1957.)

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FOOD for thought:—In Mao Tse-Tung's famous essay, *On Contradiction*, there is the following passage:

"Why can only an egg be transformed into a chicken but not a stone? Why is there identity between war and peace and none between war and a stone? Why can human beings give birth only to human beings but not to anything else? The reason is simply that identity of contradictions exists only under certain necessary conditions. Without certain necessary conditions there can be no identity whatever." (Mao Tse-Tung, *Collected works*, London, Vol. 2, p. 47.)

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THE international conference of philosophers, which took place in Warsaw in July, was devoted to the relationship between thought and action. According to its organisers its main purpose was to confront philosophical thought "in capitalist and socialist countries" and they claimed to have initiated a "dialogue between East and West." It is certainly the first time in the history of any "popular democracy" that genuine non-Communists and non-fellow-travellers have participated in such a gathering, among them A. J. Ayer, Raymond Aron, L. Van Breda the Belgian phenomenologist, Raymond Klibansky from McGill University, and others.

As happened at the sociological congress in Amsterdam last year, the "dialogue" was obstructed by different approaches to Marxism. But this time there was an open breakdown of doctrinal unity, not only within its Western, but also among its Eastern representatives. According to Professor Ayer the Russian interpretation of Marxism was the least interesting; while his impression was that the Chinese philosophers were more pragmatic and ready to bend Marxism in accordance with the needs of the concrete political situation.

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LETTERS

"THREE STAGES ON LOVE'S WAY"

To Peter Gay's reference in the August Encounter to Diderot's "review" of Bougainville's report on Tahitian love customs can be added a few data out of Captain Cook's Diary 1768–1781 (ed. Wharton, London 1893, p. 73): "14 May, 1769. This day we performed divine service ... This day closed with an odd scene at the Gate of the Fort where a young Fellow above 6 feet high made love to a little Girl about 10 or 12 years of Age publickly before several of our people and a number of the Natives. What makes me mention this is because it appear'd to be done according to Custom, for there were several women present, particularly (Queen) Obariea and several others of the better sort, and these were so far from showing the least disapprobation that they instructed the Girl how she should Act her part, who, young as she was, did not seem to want it."

Cook is only astonished and does not offer any adverse criticism. His comments on the Australian aborigines are rather benevolent; cf. p. 323, Aug. 1770: "they may appear to some to be the most wretched People upon Earth; but in reality they are far more happier than we Europeans, being wholy unacquainted not only with the Superfluous [Cook had apparently read Goldsmith and reacted against Voltaire], but with the necessary Conveniences so much sought after in Europe; they are happy in not knowing the use of them.... In short, they seemed to set no Value upon anything we gave them, nor would they ever part with anything of their own for any one Article we could offer them. This, in my opinion, Argues that they think themselves provided with all the necessarys of Life, and that they have no Superfluities." (See *Captain Cook's Journal during his first Voyage round the world ... 1768–71*, ed. W. J. L. Wharton. London 1893.)

The weatherbeaten sea-captain, having begun before the mast, apparently reacted in almost the same way as the sophisticated *philosophes:* here he presented the noble savage. Maybe Cook's reflections were known by hearsay to Diderot.

Gösta Langenfelt

Stockholm

Regarding Mr. Peter Gay's "Three Stages on Love's Way," I should like to raise two objections: first, to his usage of the term "dialectical," and, second, to his conception of the "natural" as opposed to the Christian....

In the Hegelian-Kierkegaardian sense of the term there is nothing dialectical between a "cult of sincerity" (which Mr. Gay attributes to Rousseau) and a "cult of insincerity" (which he identifies with Laclos). Dialectical means fundamentally opposed as, for example, the æsthetic stage on life's way in Kierkegaard is to the ethical or reaction to revolution in Hegel. On Mr. Gay's own view both Rousseau and Laclos stood for essentially the same thing, if I understand him correctly, a weak half-hearted protest against Christian morality. Thus he proceeds to contrast their moderate position with Diderot's open attack. I do not happen to agree with this analysis, but granted it is so, what then is the dialectical tension between Rousseau and Laclos? They are, I would imagine, two sides of the same coin. In any event, it would be quite misleading—with Kierkegaard's name in the background—to suggest that a relationship between two cults, as Mr. Gay speaks of Rousseau's and Laclos' points of view, has anything substantial in common with the dialectical counterpoint defining two distinctive modes of existence or two contrary phases of a historical process. Fear and rage are the emotional attitudes or moods which Mr. Gay identifies with the two cults. But again, fear and rage are not all opposed to each other. They are jointly the furniture of hell. Had he come out with fear and love or shyness and pride he might still have had a case.

Concerning the contrast he draws between the Christian and the natural—and it is his privilege to be prejudiced in favour of the latter—he falls into the same error as most of the *philosophes.* What indeed is "natural" about human affairs? The answer is very simple: nothing. Quite apart from the virtues and liabilities of the Christian view of sex (if there is a single Christian view), it is no less natural than the Platonic or the Romantic-Idealistic or, for that matter, the Tahitian which Mr. Gay following the naïve anthropology of Diderot seems to think of as the norm for the whole human race. I am not concerned here to argue with Mr. Gay the demerits and merits of various philosophies of sex. But surely Mr. Gay must know that primitive societies vary as much as civilised societies in their attitudes towards this phenomenon and that a point of view in its broad outlines not merely Christian, but Hebrew, Platonic, Socratic, Aristotelian, Buddhistic would seem to have more evidence in its favour than the

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elemental happiness of Tahitians who waited a long time for a Diderot to sing their praises. For Diderot's championship of Tahitian mores, *pace* Mr. Gay, is nothing but a typical manifestation of eighteenth-century Romanticism. Just as Rousseau escaped into his day-dreams and nature cult so does the rationalist, Diderot, his spiritual nature frustrated, seek compensation in a fantastic vision of Tahitian bliss. Too bad that Diderot and Gauguin couldn't have found happiness together far, far away from dreadful civilised Europe. Mr. Gay should be more careful recounting the history of illusions. This was one of the biggest in the 19th century, one of the more unfortunate results of Enlightenment utopianism.

GEOFFREY CLIVE

Berkeley, California

"ARNOLD TOYNBEE'S MILLENNIUM"

I HAVE followed with interest the correspondence provoked by Professor Trevor-Roper's brilliant and audacious polemic on Toynbee's "Study of History," but have been distressed by the inadequacy of the various explanations offered of the attitude of Trevor-Roper and other anti-Toynbeeans. Accusations of personal pique and professional jealousy have been freely hurled, and now in your September number comes a letter from a Mr. Stillman of New York, in which the attitude of the professional historians is attributed to the affronted "megalomania of Western man."

Surely, in fact, the conflict between Toynbee and the historians is but a part of the general struggle between "plain historians" and "meta-historians." Toynbee's "Old Testament" purported to be an empirical examination of the whole field of human civilised history, from which could be deduced certain rules governing the rise and fall of civilisations: it implied the ability, on the basis of these laws, to foretell the future, though Toynbee at that time shrank from drawing the logical conclusion from his own argument—viz., that Western civilisation was irretrievably doomed. The "New Testament" indeed produces a prophecy, but one that in no way follows from the original premises. Thus Toynbee has offended "plain historians" on two counts. Firstly, the claim to have examined the whole of human history empirically cannot be sustained: in fact, Toynbee has been, inevitably, highly selective in his choice of illustrative details—the facts have been chosen to support a preconceived thesis, not the thesis derived from the facts—and, moreover, the whole Toynbeean system is based on a claim to have studied comparatively a large number of civilisations, about many of which we do not have enough definite information either to support or to controvert his theories. Secondly, the claim to foretell the future seems, to the "plain historian," to be fraudulent in the extreme; fortune-telling is not within the historian's province, nor even within his capabilities. The professional historians who attack Toynbee are indeed, what Mr. Stillman will not admit them to be, "craftsmen who are honour-bound to expose a monstrous fraud."

Of course this has all been said many times before, but *A Study of History* has earned Toynbee a great popular reputation despite the warnings of the professional historians. The bases of his system have been demolished time and again, but the disciples have not been deterred. Now Professor Trevor-Roper has carried the conflict into the Toynbeean camp, by launching an attack on a popular reputation in popular terms; it should not be thought that there are not more weighty arguments against Toynbeeism than Trevor-Roper offers, but it may well be that this particular missile will be more destructive of Toynbee's reputation as a prophet than a host of more learned treatises. . . .

I wish Mr. Stillman would re-read Professor Geyl's *Debates with Historians*, in which are included his most important essays on Toynbee. He will find Geyl far more generous to the merits of Toynbee's work than he remembers. The Dutchman pays due tribute to the breadth of vision and extensive learning displayed, and confesses how much it contains that is stimulating and suggestive; but with the highly artificial pseudo-scientific system which Toynbee erects Geyl, as a "plain historian," naturally has no sympathy.

Of course, as Mr. Stillman says, "there is much stuff for thought" in *A Study of History*. Undoubtedly the "careful reader" can gain enjoyment, enlightenment, and inspiration from it. But let us indeed read it with care. If Professor Trevor-Roper has induced more people to approach the work in a spirit of critical awareness rather than of unthinking discipleship he will have achieved, I am sure, what he set out to do.

A. J. PRESSWELL

Leigh-on-Sea
Essex

THE storm of abuse that has descended upon Professor Trevor-Roper in your last two issues has, it seems to me, missed some essential points in his original article.

Firstly, he did not attack Professor Toynbee personally, so that a filial defence of the latter's character, though laudable, is irrelevant. The object of the attack was "The Study of History," its embarrassing "Conclusion" in particular, and its ultimate message.

Secondly, no one has yet refuted Professor Trevor-Roper's accusations of determinism, obscurantism, and emotional prejudice; the first is thinly disguised, the second more subtly so, the third not at all—in the book, if not in the author himself. It is difficult to read the whole work, even in abbreviation, without accepting Professor Trevor-Roper's general thesis, despite its more extraneous features. Interest in culture, *pace* Mr. Bowen, does not include disapproval of it.

Thirdly, the opposition to the nature of the attack suggests that the equally intemperate detractors of the new Regius Professor would prefer to revert to the days of the tag aptly quoted in the *Sunday Times*:

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"Ladling butter from alternate tubs,
Stubbs butters Freeman, Freeman butters Stubbs."
They should remember what Round did to Freeman. Mr. Crocker's letter is particularly ill-informed. Apart from mis-spelling the name of one of Professor Trevor-Roper's predecessors, he ignores the fact that "the lucky assignment to report on Hitler's end" resulted in a work of as much scholarship as popularity, and seems not to have heard of the excellent biography of Laud and countless very fine articles and reviews, which together make up a truly "authentic achievement."

Lastly, what on earth is discreditable about a Professor professing what he believes anyway? Isn't that what he is for? And if what he believes is that a teleological view of history (sorry, "History") supported by a mountain of specious details and culminating in a most astonishing epilogue—whose telos is not God or freedom or even glory, but destruction, darkness, and false humility—that all this is absurd and evil, should he not say so, as hard as he can? But it is blasphemous; it is offensive. So much the better, if it makes people realise what the Study of History means, what there is for us to fight. I for one am right behind him. *"Ecrasez l'infame."*

NICOLAS WALTER

Exeter College
Oxford

I WONDER whether Professor Trevor-Roper's attack against Professor Toynbee, apart from its personal aspects, does not ultimately boil down to an attack against historicism as a method of scientific thinking, whether it pertains to the prophetic anticipation of a decline of a certain civilisation or to a prediction of the "inevitability" of the triumph of State Planning or Totalitarianism over Democracy.

For in essence the charge made by Mr. Trevor-Roper is that Professor Toynbee by preaching his prophecies of doom awaiting Western civilisation is himself instrumental in bringing about that doom. His theories and prophecies have a strong fatalistic bias, it is alleged, and these instead of actual facts will contribute their share to weakening "the will to live" of the Western liberal, rationalistic, democratic world.

Those who have read a monumental work of our times—I refer to Professor Karl Popper's *The Open Society and Its Enemies*—will therefore fail to find anything new in Trevor-Roper's basic charge against Toynbee....

And I think readers of ENCOUNTER will find this paragraph from Popper's "Introduction" far more satisfying and dignified in its attack against historicism than Trevor-Roper's elaborate tirade:

"The prophets who announce that certain events are bound to happen make propaganda for them, and help to bring them about. Their story that democracy is not to last for ever is as true, and as little to the point, as the assertion that human reason is not to last for ever, since only democracy provides an institutional framework that permits reform without violence, and so the use of reason in political matters. But their story tends to discourage those who fight totalitarianism; its motive is to support the revolt against civilisation. A further historicist metaphysics are apt to relieve men from the strain of responsibilities. If you know that things are bound to happen whatever you do, then you may feel free to give up the fight against them...."

FREDIE A. MEHTA

Bombay

"EMMA"

I WAS interested to read M. H. Statham's comments on Lionel Trilling's article on *Emma*. The novel is quite clearly written to expose the inadequacy of the social virtues alone, to show that such a concern for them as Emma and Frank Churchill have ends by defeating its own object at Box Hill.... From *Sense and Sensibility* onwards, Jane Austen was very much concerned with contrasting the points of view of Lord Chesterfield and Dr. Johnson, and she is still debating the issue in *Persuasion*. In a letter to his son, dated October 12th, 1748, Lord Chesterfield puts forward his views on what constitutes good company, and we can be sure that it was in Jane Austen's mind when the discussion takes place in *Persuasion* between Anne and Mr. Elliott. All Jane Austen's heroes, from Colonel Brandon to Captain Wentworth, embody the Johnsonian virtues of endurance and stoicism, and her moral code, like his, involves not merely a belief in personal values, in "character," but in the religious beliefs which allow her heroines to survive. At the same time, she is very much aware of the dangers of religious hypocrisy, and the horror that we feel at times in *Emma* is due to the fact that the heroine is in danger of sinking to the level of Mrs. Elton.

FRANK W. BRADBROOK

University College of North Wales,
Bangor

NEW P.E.N. ANTHOLOGY

FOR the past six years P.E.N. anthologies of new verse have appeared under the imprint of Messrs. Michael Joseph who will next year be publishing a seventh—*New Poems: 1958*, edited by Bonamy Dobrée, Louis MacNeice, and Philip Larkin.

I should be grateful if you would allow me to invite your readers to submit work for consideration. Manuscripts should be addressed to The Editors, *New Poems: 1958*, P.E.N., 62 Glebe Place, London, S.W.3, accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope for return, and, in cases where an acknowledgment is desired, by a stamped addressed postcard. Not more than *two* poems may be submitted by each poet; closing date, 31st October, 1957.

Poems which have appeared in book-form cannot be considered, but work published in periodicals during 1957 is eligible. Payment will be made for all poems accepted.

DAVID CARVER

London, S.W.3

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BOOKS

The Worst of Both Worlds

WITH that bulldog tenacity which excites a universal awe, that incomparably obstinate, persistent, and unyielding fixedness of mind, the British people seem to have set themselves resolutely to choose the worst of both worlds. This is true in economics, where they are sufficiently socialistic to prevent the capitalist system from working at its best, but insufficiently so to allow any socialist order to operate. It is true in military affairs, where they are too weak to move easily as a Great Power, and too strong (now having the Bomb) to enjoy the relative freedom of action of a small one. It is true in education, where they are too proud to "lower standards" so as to allow for mass higher education, but not humble enough to be satisfied with the present mechanism that produces a small, well-trained élite. Above all, perhaps, it is true in the sphere of culture to which they deny private philanthropy (by virtue of heavy taxation) while begrudging public support, and which they protect from the importunities of commercialism while withholding from it the subsidies that would permit it otherwise to survive.

The recent decision of the B.B.C. to emasculate its Third Programme and Home Service in favour of light entertainment can only be understood against this background. It certainly cannot be understood in and of itself, and the B.B.C. has yet to present any kind of comprehensible defence of its new course. Its statements have been bland, vague, and slightly sinister—"reassurances" that have prompted T. S. Eliot to remark: "I am always filled with alarm when I read a public statement by anyone in authority, the sense of which I fail utterly to grasp." And, really, what could it say? There is no real premeditation behind its action; only the dark, compulsive repetition of a disastrous habit, which, refusing to choose between evils, takes the pair.

As things now stand, the B.B.C. is on the way to denying the grounds of its very existence, under the plea that it must do this to survive. If it is primarily light entertainment that is to be distributed, what on earth does one want a government monopoly for? It would be more sensible to make radio commercial and competitive: the entertainment would be more lavish, since the advertising agencies have more money to spend on this than does the Treasury, and it needn't cost the listener a penny in licence fees. More important: some of the programmes at least would probably be on a much higher level, assuming that the thoroughly commercial American system of sponsored broadcasting were adopted; many of the giant industrial firms, for whom advertising is primarily a matter of creating goodwill, would be pleased to have their names associated with symphonies, operas, good drama, and other programmes that reach an influential—if small—part of the population.

On the other hand, there is everything to be said for the continuance of the B.B.C. monopoly *if* it justifies itself in terms of its educational mission. This mission is not merely to help improve men's minds. It is far weightier than that. It is to serve as a standing proof that men's minds can be improved, and a perpetual reminder that they ought to be improved. Just how necessary this reminder is, may be gathered from a recent incident. In the current proceedings against the London Library, whose tax-exempt status the Board of Inland Revenue is challenging, the representative of this Board, a Mr. S. R. Davies, said:

> *"Is it [The London Library] really concerned with the advancement of literature, or is it concerned with providing a magnificent collection of books in dignified surroundings—and with the great advantage of members being allowed to take them home—in order that cultured persons may enjoy their kind of amusement in the way that less cultured persons enjoy going to football matches?"*

There is nothing uniquely English about this

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attitude; it may even be described as the common one. But there *is* something uniquely English and uncommon about the B.B.C.—or, rather, there has been until now.

There can be no doubt of the B.B.C.'s past achievement. As Mr. Peter Laslett points out,* it has been "the most successful of all 20th-century British institutions," though it might not occur to many people to think so. Anyone who has to do with Americans and Europeans will have perceived how deeply they admire it—especially the Third Programme—and how generous is their estimate of the present level and vitality of British culture as a result. Many of them have, of course, never heard the B.B.C. or the Third Programme. But that doesn't prevent them from speaking about it in glowing terms. (One might say it helps.) Indeed, this fact makes nonsense of the Director-General's statement that "in face of rising costs, large circulations become of first importance." The truth is that large circulations are of *no* importance, so far as the B.B.C.'s educational function is concerned. The Third Programme would still be a bargain at its present paltry cost of one million pounds a year—a fraction of what the Soviet Government spent on the recent World Youth Festival—if *no one* listened, just so long as everyone knew it was there. It would still hold up to the British people a cultural measure by which the cheap, the trivial, the superficial could be measured. It would still represent a great British achievement in the eyes of a world that is perplexedly facing the lowering of cultural standards by what are called "the popular arts." The prestige accruing to this country would still be of a magnitude and intensity unpurchasable by any other means. Were the Third Programme only a pure fiction, it would nevertheless unquestionably be to British advantage to sustain the fiction as long as possible.

We all know that people like Mr. Davies do exist in England, and that there are even many of them to be found in positions of high authority. But, oddly enough, foreigners do not know this. Hearing of the existence of the Third Programme, they assume that England is a land where culture is officially encouraged and learning officially respected. They look to this country with a special kind of fondness and loving envy. The word "British" becomes associated with things of fine quality; the London weeklies, *The Times* and the *Manchester Guardian*, are dutifully subscribed to by people who wish to partake vicariously of this superior society. Ought we to disillusion them? Is it good politics, even? *We* know how miserly British Authority is when it comes to cultural affairs, how stodgily uncomprehending. *We* know that Britain spends not much more for the support of the arts than the German province of Hesse. But can't it be kept a family secret?

Irving Kristol

* In his contribution to the pamphlet *Unsound Broadcasting: The Case Against the B.B.C.'s New Policy*. Distributed for the Sound Broadcasting Society by Faber and Faber. 1s.

SYMBOLISTS AND MODERNS

Romantic Image. By Frank Kermode. *Routledge and Kegan Paul.* 18s.

Modern poetics is a confused affair. The most eminent of living women poets, whose work has been known for thirty years, is reviewed in two Sunday papers of the same date: in one of them she is celebrated as the most essentially poetic genius of the century: in the other she is described as an inflated elegant trifler. Both reviewers know and care for poetry, in their ways. Can there ever have been a time when notions of what poetry is about have been so various and so vague? Contemporary criticism is a jungle, and this is not altogether the critics' fault; in earlier times they would have been working within a pretty generally agreed frame of literary ideas. And now there is none. The critical assumptions on which the poets work are mutually contrary; and the assumptions on which they say they are working are often contradicted by the poetry itself. A good deal has been heard in the last forty years about classicism as a basis for 20th-century poetry; indeed the whole thing begins with an anti-romantic flare-up started by T. E. Hulme and others. But there is nothing remotely neo-classical in the actual poetry of the age; and it has always been obvious to anyone who reads poetry with any attention that the real motive force behind the poetical revolution of the early part of this century was French Symbolism, mediated in various ways.

This is the background of Mr. Kermode's admirable study. He has gone a step further by showing that the Symbolist indoctrination was more fundamental than had been supposed and that the presuppositions that stand behind modern poetry are in fact the same as the Symbolist ones. They look different because they have been given a new philosophical disguise, but they are the same; and the same therefore in essentials as the old Romantic ones. Symbolism is an extension of the Romantic idea, and modern poetry simply represents its last phase. This could be just a chapter of literary history, but as it is handled in *Romantic Image* it is a

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good deal more. It often happens that the next step can only be taken, in literature as well as politics, when concealed historical assumptions have been brought to the surface, and the wrong ones blown up; and it is just this that Mr. Kermode sets out to do.

The twin assumptions that he finds behind modern poetry and criticism are "that the image is, in Wyndham Lewis' phrase, 'the primary pigment of poetry'; and that the poet who uses it is by that very fact differentiated from other men and seriously at odds with the society in which he has to live." These two ideas, the isolation of the artist and that he is isolated because he is in pursuit of a particular kind of vision, sound thoroughly familiar, thoroughly Romantic, and very easy to put in such a way that they sound thoroughly out-of-date. Mr. Kermode's business is to show that they were elaborated by the Symbolists, and survive, with various but only superficial modifications, in our own day. His hope is that he has found a new way of looking at these assumptions; he argues with great vigour and intensity; and in the end, I think, makes nearly all his case. I am not quite convinced that the isolation of the artist is as closely connected with his pursuit of the Image as Mr. Kermode suggests; megapolitan civilisation and the decay of the craftsmen who formed a bridge between the artists and the rest of the world must also have something to do with it. And he has perhaps made things easier for himself by tracing his connections mainly in the work of Yeats, whom few people would have any difficulty in placing within the Romantic ethos. And there is a big obstacle at the start in the concept of the Image itself. What is the Image anyway?

This is a very compressed essay, of little more than a hundred and sixty pages; the argument is very close and the scale forbids elaboration. All becomes clear in the end, but I suspect a good many readers would have liked to have the nature and status of the Image more clearly established at the start. The empirical Anglo-Saxon is haunted and worried by these grandiose conceptions. What, for example, is the Symbol of the Symbolists? The same thing as the Image, evidently; but no one who has ever wrestled with Mr. Lehmann's *Symbolist Aesthetic in France* is likely to feel very confident about what the Symbol is either. Both words refer at any rate to a conception of poetry as a peculiar kind of entity with its own mode of being. Poetry on this theory is not what Dryden thought it was, plain prose truth, diversified by fancy, and "clothed in apt, significant, and sounding words." If it attains truth, it reaches it by its own peculiar route: but its primary business is not to assert something, simply to *be* something.

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And the Image is the embodiment of this complex mode of being—sometimes a single moment of sensuous-emotional apprehension, sometimes a whole poem; but not often a long poem. For the long poem must contain much "binding matter" by which the instantaneous purity of the Image is dimmed. The Image is just itself; there is no equivalent for it, and it cannot be represented in any other terms. Here we come to recognise the characteristic modern note—that a poem cannot be paraphrased, that the "sense" is not the poem, and that explanations of its prose tenor are not so much inadequate as not explanations at all.

This way of thinking about poetry in the Romantics leads to the claim that poetry has its own special means of access to truth, its own private line to the eternal world, eternally subsistent and authentically attainable. This is Coleridge's position, and it means of course that poetry is very easily assimilated to religion. Among the Symbolists, less devout and more esoteric, it develops into the view of poetry as a branch of occultism, *l'alchimie du verbe*. Rimbaud sees poetry as literally a magical illumination, Mallarmé as the only means of giving significance to a universe of nothingness and chaos. We might add (though Mr. Kermode does not) that this vision ended in despair. Rimbaud abandoned poetry for slave-trading, and Mallarmé came to realise that an isolated poetical success cannot confer meaning on a whole fortuitous universe. *Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard*. The special theme of *Romantic Image* is to show that in spite of the abandonment of these transcendental claims, in spite even of a concerted campaign against all illicit commerce between poetry and the infinite, the view of the nature of poetry remains fundamentally unchanged. A brilliant chapter on T. E. Hulme has little difficulty in disposing of his claim to be in any fundamental sense a classicist. The old theory had to be adapted to a more prosaic and positivist philosophy of language, and was modified still further in the same direction by later theorists like I. A. Richards. But Hulme's view of poetry was simply the Symbolist one given a new look by some confusing and not wholly consistent philosophical trappings—"crap like Bergson," as they were elegantly labelled by Ezra Pound. And in spite of Pound's contempt for his philosophising, Hulme became an influential guide for the modern poetic movement, and stands behind, or at any rate shoulder to shoulder, with the Imagists.

Imagism is the cradle of distinctively modern poetry, and its doctrine that poetry only subsists in complex, clearly realised, usually visual images has become little less than an article of faith. "Thinking in images" becomes the test of poetic utterance; only what has been conceived in this sensuous, anti-discursive fashion is authentically poetry. Though one suspects that what often happens is that the poet thinks like anybody else and then finds images in which to clothe his reflections; and Mr. Eliot's doctrine of the objective correlative even seems to recommend this process. "The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding . . . a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that particular emotion." At all events, poetry is only poetry when thought, feeling, or reflection is completely fused with its sensuous embodiment.

And this leads directly to another current dogma, the historical dogma that at some blessed period this fusion always occurred, thought and feeling always found their proper sensuous embodiment—until some disastrous "dissociation of sensibility" took place, after which poets could only think and feel and enjoy sensuous experience in separate compartments. (From this deplorable state our numbers were, of course, rescued by "Prufock" and Ezra Pound's Chinese translations.) Mr. Kermode's argument all builds up to a massive and devastating attack on the "dissociation of sensibility" doctrine, and by the time he has finished with it it has been pretty thoroughly demolished, literally, typically, allegorically, and anagogically. We realise by this time that Mr. Kermode has several axes to grind, and here they all are, bright, sharp, and gleaming formidably. What does he want to do with them? Above all to hack down that dense jungle of contemporary critical theory that sets up Donne against Milton, sets up all poets of supposedly unified sensibility against all poets of a supposedly "dissociated" one, and denies the right of poetry to discourse, to use the rhetoric of the market-place if it will. The rewriting of English poetical history in terms of this doctrine has had an extraordinary success in the last twenty years—largely a tribute to Mr. Eliot's persuasive powers. Students arrive from remotest Wales, Africa, or Iowa, already primed with the knowledge that the 17th century was a good thing because its sensibility was not dissociated, and the 19th century a bad one because this calamitous fission had taken place. Mr. Kermode thinks this doctrine has done its work, and it is time that it was decently pensioned off. His special personal interest is to bring about a renewed appreciation of Milton; but he sees too, in the case that he has been making, important possibilities for the future of poetry.

It is not only its intelligence, vigour, and range of reference that makes this essay so invigorating, it is also the deep concern with poetry—both poetry as written and poetry as

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read. By the time we reach the end we are very much disposed to agree with the implications of its closing chapter—that the Symbolist doctrine is at length becoming a strait-jacket for poetry and thinking about poetry. Poetry has the right to many kinds of rhetoric, among others the right to discourse and to reflect, to share not only the mysterious illumination of the Image "but also the ordinary syntax of the daily life of action." It has been apparent for long enough that the phase of hermetic, allusive, elaborately learned poetry was exhausted. The counter-current that was set going in the thirties has proved, as a movement, to be partly abortive, owing to the political disasters of the last twenty years; and the poets of that period have had to continue by finding more or less lonely ways. The poetry thrown up by the post-war welfare state, in spite of some individual talents, is not at present moving in any very interesting direction; mostly it prefers marking time. If Mr. Kermode's thesis were to gain ground, not among critics but among poets, we might see a revival of the long poem, and a more successful and comprehensive attempt to link poetry with the world of common experience. But whether any of this will occur is of course another matter.

Graham Hough

THE YOUNG PERSON'S CHEEK

A History of Punch. By R. G. G. Price. *Collins.* 30s.

"*A CERTAIN institution in Mr. Podsnap's mind which he called 'the young person' ...was an inconvenient and exacting institution, as requiring everything in the universe to be filed down and fitted to it. The question about everything was, would it bring a blush into the cheek of the young person? And the inconvenience of the young person was that, according to Mr. Podsnap, she seemed always to burst into blushes when there was no need at all. There appeared to be no line of demarcation between the young person's excessive innocence, and another person's guiltiest knowledge.*" Thus Dickens in 1864 pinpointed the middle-class attitude to the major and minor arts so accurately that paraphrases still recur fairly frequently from the judicial bench. "*Punch is the first comic we ever saw which was not vulgar. It will provoke many a hearty laugh, but never call a blush to the most delicate cheek.*" Thus the *Somerset County Gazette*, at an unidentified date, requoted by Mr.

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R. G. G. Price from H. M. Spielmann's *The History of Punch* (1895).

The change from the definite article in Mr. Spielmann's title to the indefinite in Mr. Price's is quite intentional. When a weekly journal has run for 116 years, there are a number of ways in which its history might be approached. It might (I had hoped it would) be considered as part of the social history of the period, as a mirror of the Podsnaps to whom it catered; it might (I had hoped it would) have had its contents systematically analysed to show the trends in what was considered humorous or mentionable, what views and attitudes respectable, and what abhorrent, over the years of its existence; it might have been considered as a commercial property whose history would have illumined that of publication and advertisement. However, in his own words, Mr. Price is *"concerned with* Punch *itself, the collection of pictures and letterpress that its readers find when they open an issue. As these contributions are produced by contributors and edited by Editors, I have had to deal with men as well as with articles and poems and cartoons and jokes."* As the quotation suggests, it is with some regret that Mr. Price has given information about people; the main body of his *History* consists of criticism and appreciation of the contents as they have appeared, predominantly kindly and enthusiastic, but delivered in a somewhat school-masterish tone of finality (the dust-jacket tells us that Mr. Price has been a teacher). He makes a number of *ex cathedra* judgments and statements on the distinction between humour and satire, parody and lampoon, the excellence of verse, prose, and drawing, with an assurance which one would think fairly unusual from an adult addressing his equals on such very vexed subjects.*

A history of *Punch* could have been fascinating as an aspect of social history. Probably more clearly than any other single source, it traces the rise, dominance, and decline of the English middle class, the Podsnaps, both explicitly as a self-portrait, with all the warts left out, and implicitly by the values it expressed and upheld. Throughout nearly the whole of its history it has been emphatically middle-class, in its first decade or so anti-monarchical, anti-aristocratic, more in sympathy with the people than with the gentry; then as its readers went to Dr. Arnold's Rugby or the other public schools on the same model, it turned scholarly and gentlemanlike (the only intentional dirty quip that I know of in its pure pages is a Latin pun), very definitely officer-class, and, in the current phrase, considering itself part of "the Establishment," self-righteous, sentimental and hard-hearted; one of Mr. Price's few social statements, referring to a series of articles started in 1950, is that this series "contained almost the first pity for the poor shown by *Punch* for about eighty years." As the English middle class lost its dominance, so did *Punch* (after a long period of nostalgia) become uncertain of its identity; today it is not clearly the organ of any social class, it is not even emphatically national. Except for the question of language, much of its contemporary contents could have appeared anywhere in the Western world.

Mr. Price does tell us quite a lot about the eight men who have occupied the editorial chair and some of their chief assistants and contributors; and the interesting fact emerges that very few of them were full members of the class for whom they acted as spokesmen. Many were members of minority groups—Roman Catholics, Jews, Quakers, Huguenots; or, if they were C. of E. and English-born, bore the awful stigma, as in Owen Seaman's case, of an origin in Trade which had to be guiltily concealed. It is perhaps because they were consciously assuming the rôle of officers and gentlemen that they gave such a creditable performance.

From the age of eight (that is in 1918), Mr. Price, we are told, wanted to write for *Punch*, and he rates the literary value of the paper's contents much more highly than I should be inclined to do. Although over the century a very great many distinguished writers have contributed to its pages they have, to my mind, rarely produced their best work therein; only in the case of the Grossmiths' *Diary of a Nobody*, A. P. Herbert's *Misleading Cases*, A. A. Milne's *When We Were Very Young*, and T. Anstey's *Voces Populi* (a work and an author now much under-rated) can one say that, but for *Punch*, they would probably not have been written. The light verse, though accomplished, was mostly undistinguished; but Mr. Price does make a case for considering more seriously than has been done hitherto the cartoons and illustrations as a major aspect of English black-and-white art over the period; Mr. Kenneth Bird has contributed a most informative short appendix on the techniques of picture reproduction used by the paper. The standards of criticism of short prose pieces and comic drawings are so undetermined that personal enjoyment is almost certainly as good a criterion as any; Mr. Price

* In one of the last pages of this *History* I am given a beta minus, but I do not think this has influenced my judgment in any way; as a very occasional contributor I certainly did not expect to find my name mentioned. I only refer to it here lest my disappointment at what this *History* has failed to do be ascribed to personal pique.

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has enjoyed a very great deal, and will tell the inquiring reader what he ought to think of nearly every contributor from Henry Mayhew and William Makepeace Thackeray to Malcolm Muggeridge, John Betjeman, and even

Geoffrey Gorer

LIBERALS DIVIDED

The Unservile State: Essays in Liberty and Welfare. Edited by GEORGE WATSON. *George Allen and Unwin.* 21s. net.

I REMEMBER just after the war hearing a prominent member of the Italian Liberal Party, then *en poste* in London, try to justify his political position by explaining that in all essentials the Italian Liberal Party was the equivalent of the British Conservative Party. The question that occurred to me then and must have to many others on other occasions, whether this wasn't just as true of the British Liberal Party, receives here a definitive answer. From *The Unservile State*—a collection of fourteen essays representing all shades of opinion within the Liberal Party—it emerges quite clearly that one bloc of the party stands well to the left of the Conservative Party and the other well to the right of it.

How this has come about is not hard to understand. Traditionally, the Liberal is identified as one who places supreme value on the liberty of the individual to do as he wishes: consequently for him, in any given situation, the correct course of political action (or inaction) is that which on balance results in a greater amount of such liberty than any alternative course. This principle, however—historically at any rate—would appear to admit of a weaker and a stronger interpretation, and the Right and the Left of the Party divide on just this issue. The Left favours a wider interpretation, on which the principle applies to all fields of social life including the economic: whereas the Right favours a narrower interpretation of it, which would exclude economic matters from its province—or, more accurately perhaps, the Right thinks that there is no point in extending the principle to economic life since one knows in advance that anything that one does (as opposed presumably to "allows to happen") in this field is bound to constrict liberty more than it will expand it.

In this anthology, it is, for better or for worse, the Right that steals the limelight. Their essays have a certain vivacity, a certain provocativeness to them that the sententious effusions of their colleagues completely lack: they command our attention, as well as repel it, while the writings of the Left seem blissfully indifferent to the whole subject of human interest. The general impression made by the book, it might be said, is that of a club where a few noisy and tendentious young men are engaged in declaiming their political views and doing so with such violence and rhetoric and showiness that without realising it, they have sent their elders and betters to sleep. But once one has got used to the noise, what really emerges? What in the last resort have the growlers got that the snorers haven't?

The Right (Peter Wiles, Graham Hutton, Professor Peacock) would seem to believe:

(a) *that there should be inequality of income* (pp. 95–100, 176–7). However, no Socialist, let alone a "left-wing Liberal," would disagree with this as it stands. The crucial question is, what spread of income does one think desirable? Is, for instance, the present spread of 20:1 correct? On this point, however, the Right disappointingly gives no answer, which may be because they believe (as Wiles certainly does) in complete laissez-faire in wage determination. This, however, is a particular and very extreme version of the original belief, which so far from following from, is very dubiously compatible with, the ordinary arguments for income inequality (the "rent of ability," efficiency, "fairness"), and raises difficulties all its own. (To try and get round these difficulties, as Wiles wishes to, by suggesting that inadequate earnings could be supplemented by welfare payments, is disingenuous: for any such system of "welfare" would be unacceptable in practice and theoretically would make nonsense of the claim to a laissez-faire situation.)

(b) *that the social services should be severely reduced and placed on a "means test" basis* (pp. 123, 185). Any such argument, however, must rest on a very narrow conception of the social services as essentially re-distributive *between* classes, and also ignores their social rôle. It is significant that it seems absurd to distribute the same to all regardless of means only when one is contemplating a society where there is not just gross inequality of income but also gross inequality of property. Yet elsewhere the Right professes to believe in greater equality of property (pp. 91–5, 101).

(c) *that parents should be allowed tax relief on the fees of private education* (p. 130). This is even more unsociological than the previous proposal. For in Great Britain to-day the issue is only superficially stated as private *v.* public education: materially, it is class *v.* classless education.

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(d) *that new property should be built up, rather than the old confiscated* (p. 101). The construction of new private property must, however, be a secondary product rather than a direct achievement of Government policy. Accordingly it may be referred to in praise or in justification of some policy: it cannot properly figure in the statement of that policy.

This book will doubtless be hailed in some quarters as an example of Liberal "rethinking." I cannot see that it is—at least not in the contemporary sense. If it is, it is so only in the sense made famous by an Archbishop of recent years who is supposed to have declared that, at the age of eighteen, he deliberately gave up thinking and devoted himself for the rest of his life to rethinking what he had already thought.

Richard Wollheim

FANTASIES AND SOBRIETIES

The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold. By EVELYN WAUGH. *Chapman and Hall.* 12s. 6d.

Chocolates for Breakfast. By PAMELA MOORE. *Longmans.* 12s. 6d.

Strange Evil. By JANE GASKELL. *Hutchinson.* 12s. 6d.

The Field of Vision. By WRIGHT MORRIS. *Weidenfeld and Nicolson.* 15s.

The Assistant. By BERNARD MALAMUD. *Farrar, Strauss and Cudahy.* $3.50.

IT's hardly original of me to suggest that psycho-analysis is the disease of which it pretends to be the cure; and other methods of clinical psychiatry are no less vulnerable to fundamental objections. Nervous breakdowns have become as fashionable as gout once was. Just as Americans of the 'twenties did not believe they had grown up until they had survived at least one attack of gonorrhœa, so those of the present day regard the gates of a mental hospital as the one sure entrance to the world of adult irresponsibilities. And, with the increase in the number of amateur neurotics, goes an equal increase in the pretensions of self-appointed specialists who supply free advice to their friends or distribute tranquillisers and slimming tablets. These "specialists" manufacture neurotics who, in their turn, sometimes succeed in satisfying themselves that they too are specialists. And so to Mr. Pinfold.

He was converted to acute paranoia by a well-meaning chemist who belaboured him with bromides that had to be washed down with brandy. To escape this succour he goes on a long sea trip during which his delusions of persecution accumulate until he faces up to his ghostly tormentors on the aeroplane in which they follow him home. Had Mr. Pinfold been a creation of any writer less sane than Mr. Evelyn Waugh, the chances are that he would have ended up as a chemist, dedicated to the preservation of human sanity, giving us all, with infinite generosity, a dose of his "cure." But Mr. Pinfold keeps his maker's imprint. Throughout his ordeal he sticks to reality as stubbornly as a crayfish to its hole. He refuses to be tempted into the stream of consciousness where he would, inevitably, have been drowned. Instead of blubbering confidences at us he gazes "at his puzzled soapy face." Even when things were at their worst: "He chose a Brigade tie to wear that morning and a cap that matched his tweed suit." As a result, he survives.

Not only that, but his objectivity allows this chronicle to be a remarkably accurate account of paranoia, from which the basic psychodynamics can be deduced as lucidly as from the still more unfortunate case of Dr. Schreiber. No two men could have fewer ideas in common than Sigmund Freud and Evelyn Waugh. Their only resemblance is in the uncompromising hard-headedness of their observations. But that is enough. They agree about the facts and, since Mr. Waugh has no theories, he confirms, though perhaps unconsciously, those of Freud.

To detail this parallel would take too long and there is very little else to be said about this book except to lament that it is not better than it is. It starts off well, the first three chapters being as funny as any of the early farces. Then, too, a new and more metaphysical absurdity can be detected in places, the kind of absurdity that would vastly increase Mr. Waugh's prestige if he would only arrange to have his work translated into German and then retranslated into English and published under some such name as Keitelbum. If, after these mutilations, this book had been left unfinished, it might have been ranked beside the revelations of Kafka. Mr. Pinfold, at least, is as worried about the nature of authority as was K. "What was the proper procedure, if any existed, for putting a Captain in irons on his own ship?" And, like K., Mr. Pinfold follows the proper procedure, when it exists, with earnest irrelevance. But Mr. Waugh did finish his book, and, luckily, we do not have to read it in retranslation. Mr. Pinfold regains his sanity. Mr. Pinfold talks in exquisite English. Mr. Pinfold is quite unlike K. Far too unlike him. For the last fifty pages of this book, Mr. Pinfold is a bore. His fantasies become stereotyped and his return to normality is achieved by the kind of dogged tenacity that wins battles rather than by the gay

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brilliance that captures laurels. Assuming, as seems intended, an element of autobiography in his portrait, I find myself worried by the thought that, for the first time in his life, Mr. Waugh has taken himself more seriously than his art.

THE same will never be said of Miss Pamela Moore. She seems very serious about everything, except the writing of novels. Not that she botches the job. She does a fairly competent imitation of the early manner of John O'Hara, the smell of bedrooms and regurgitated liquor leading us through innumerable hangovers to the inevitable suicide. True, she just can't get the right amount of tension out of her dialogue, her characters (especially the male ones) stumble drunkenly into the deepest of clichés and never quite manage to climb out again. Yet they keep trying, and Miss Moore keeps trying. It is depressing that she should be trying to do something that has already been done by hundreds of older writers. At eighteen one should have more originality than this. Perhaps, as she grows older and develops more confidence, Miss Moore will assert her individuality but, unless she makes a start in the near future, she will have no individuality to assert. It is between the ages of fifteen and twenty, when the brain is at its brightest and the emotions at their most vivid, that a writer creates his personality; and it is not for nothing that my friend, the ancient Chinaman, insists that he is the most remarkable of youthful prodigies since, even at the age of five score and ten, he is capable of inventing a new idea, of being youthful.

Miss Moore does confirm, however (though I doubt whether she knows what she's doing), what I said about psycho-analysis manufacturing neurotics. Her heroine, Courtney, begins as an ordinary adolescent, brooding, bad-tempered, intelligent, and lazy. Over-solicitous for her welfare, teachers and doctors, conscripted parents and volunteer uncles almost succeed in driving her round the bend. She makes a mental sanatorium after having been made by a faggot. Then to New York, where she gets in with a crowd who interpret everything they can't drink. Only the salutary suicide of her best friend saves Courtney, and even that has to be committed according to the proper Freudian procedure. The crudity with which psycho-analytic interpretations are plastered on to every incident is almost as much of an indictment of the amateur therapist as the incidents themselves. Wherever it may lead, this pseudo-psychiatry certainly encourages bad art, the kind of writing that Freud would have detested.

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Miss Jane Gaskell is a good deal younger than Miss Moore and was only fourteen when *Strange Evil* was accepted. For once, a publisher seems justified in encouraging a girl who has not yet reached the "age of consent." Whatever else may be said of her, it cannot be denied that Miss Gaskell has a literary personality of her own. (A plump aristocrat in tweedy suits who insists on wearing her best diamonds whenever she runs across the street to buy the latest space thriller?) It may not be a consistent personality but I doubt if anybody would deny a genuine charm to its inconsistencies, and even that charm cannot hide more sterling qualities —honesty, inventiveness, and a high ideal of style, both in living and writing. In her fantasy world, where very unusual fairies effect a social and religious revolution, she does not always manage to attain her own ideals. She can write very well, especially in her descriptions of action, but she can also smother her talent under piles of words. Yet never entirely. There is hardly a sentence that does not contain at least one good phrase though there are a great number that contain too many "good phrases." What I did object to was her message. She describes the victory of her heroes with gusto but hardly with grace: "Active for the most part in tearing down tapestries, symbols, and effigies of the filthy religion of the Internals, there was quick and humane killing also of those who were found still left. To-day engaged in the demolition and the ending of the old régime, to-morrow they would be engaged in the building and the living of the new." But perhaps we all feel that way at fourteen. The masters in the art of "humane killing" for the sake of a "new régime" are simply those who, like Herr Hitler, never grow up.

After these adolescent high jinks and low spirits it was interesting to turn to the glum little world in which the adults spend their portentous days, interesting but hardly invigorating. Even the lunacy of Mr. Pinfold becomes monumental in its sobriety when compared to Miss Moore's set, but her wretched cocktail parties are gay in comparison to the gospel of despair that is preached by Mr. Wright Morris. There is no mistaking the evangelical note.

> *The problem? In an age of How-to-do-it, the problem was how not. How* not *to be embalmed in a flannel pocket, how* not *to be frozen in a coonskin hat. How to live in spite of, not because of, something called character. To keep it open, to keep the puzzle puzzling, the pattern changing and alive.*

Mr. Morris's half-dozen Americans at a Mexican bullfight are certainly not prevented from "living" by an excess of character, but by numerous excesses of language. Probably the stammerings of McKee's mental processes will be intelligible in the Mid-west. They require close study here, and, once they have been understood, they don't throw much light on anything else, not even McKee. Yet something of this strange author's deep concern for our spiritual welfare does manage to penetrate through the blanket of stream-of-consciousness pretentiosity in which he has tried to hide it. Without the brilliance of Miss Djuna Barnes he yet has a little of her width of sympathy and a good deal of her depth. I was left with the impression that a considerable talent had gone awry.

Mr. Bernard Malamud, too, has written a book of agonising sincerity. Most of the agony, however, comes from my sympathy for Mr. Malamud rather than from my pity for his characters. It *is* agonising to find that so much honesty, so much intelligence, such intense modesty and complete integrity do *not* produce a good book—that they produce only an honest, intelligent, modest, and well-integrated one. (I can think of a number of literary cardsharpers who do write good books.) Mr. Malamud tells the story of an orphaned Italian youth who, after having attacked a Jewish grocer, is struck by such remorse that the rest of his life is devoted to the Jew and his family; until finally he becomes a Jew himself. The fault is not sentimentality, though this resumé might give that impression. Lots of good books are sentimental. The fault is drabness. Mr. Malamud brings his characters to life, all right, but to such a life that both they and the reader would be better out of it. Yet it is an authentic life, though a very boring one.

Does this mean that only adolescent fantasies or paranoiac delusions can produce good books? I hope not.

Burns Singer

TRAVELLERS' TALES

The Man in the Name: Essays on the Experience of Poetry. By Leonard Unger. *Minnesota University Press.* (*London: Oxford University Press.* 32s.

The Poetry of Experience: The Dramatic Monologue in Modern Literary Tradition. By Robert Langbaum. *Chatto and Windus.* 21s.

It is, we are assured, a Second-Hand Age—in which we sit in comfortable arm-chairs reading (some thousands of us) about the experiences of a couple of chaps in Waikiki or

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Kuala Lumpur, or televiewing (some millions of us) a solemn ballet performed by twenty-two chaps against a backdrop of the gas-works at Kennington or the cathedral at Worcester: but never by any chance going to Waikiki or Kuala Lumpur, or playing cricket, or even going to Kennington or Worcester, ourselves. It is no more than a truism, therefore, to remark that an age which styles itself an "Age of Criticism" is also an age of second-hand literature. But the fault here seems to be worse. There may be excellent reasons, of laziness or lack of leisure, for not venturing to Waikiki or to Worcester, but really there is absolutely no reason why one should not read a book without the assistance of a literary broker: no reason, but rather a fear, an unnecessary modesty, induced by the peacocking professors, which leads us to suppose that our unaided reading-efforts may prove incompetent.

This said, I hasten to add that, though the "explicatory literary essay" may be an essentially bad form (and is certainly at the moment a more-or-less played-out one), the two books under review are nevertheless very favourable examples of it. Mr. Unger's is the less adventurous, consisting for the greater (and most valuable) part of straight "explications" of Keats' *Ode to Autumn*, Eliot's *Ash Wednesday*, and essays upon such allied subjects as "T. S. Eliot's Rose-garden" and "Laforgue, Conrad, and T. S. Eliot"—in the last of which illuminating, if not wholly convincing, parallels are drawn between Eliot's work and Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. The danger, and indeed the curse, of most contemporary "explications" is that vast Baroque edifices of sophistication are erected upon inadequate foundations—not merely of common sense but of plain factual knowledge. Mr. Unger does not over-fantasticate and he is sensible and widely-informed. All the same, his foundations are not always good enough. Thus, discussing

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;

he remarks

The transitive, somewhat rare use of the verb bloom, *with its springlike associations, is perhaps surprising....*

It is something of a nasty shock to the reader to realise that his trusted explicator, for all his earnest posturings, has simply not understood even the plain prose sense of his text—*bloom* of course having nothing to do with the flowers that do it in Mr. Unger's spring (tra-la) but being what the plums have on them in Mr. Keats' autumn. If the explicator is not immaculate, he is nothing. And if he does not know the meaning, weight and shape and colour of every word in the language, he will never be immaculate. And if he does, of course, he will never be an explicator, he will be a *first-hand* writer—which brings us back to the old war-cry of none but the poets being fit to explain the poets.

You say I am repeating
Something I have said before. I shall say it again.
Shall I say it again?

Not here perhaps. But it is in a way a comic token of the near-bankruptcy of the explicatory trade that one of my books should be subtitled "The Experience of Poetry," and the other titled "The Poetry of Experience." "The Poetry of Poetry" and "The Experience of Experience," now, would be more the titles to tickle this reviewer's fancy. All the same, whereas Mr. Unger's seems to me a worthy, Mr. Langbaum's seems in some ways an important, book. There is the usual explicatory preponderance, no better nor worse than the good average of its kind: but the more general matter, particularly the opening chapter on "Romanticism as a

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Modern Tradition," is out of the common run. Mr. Langbaum proposes the apparent paradox that the eighteenth was the subjective century and that Romanticism is, contrary to what we were told in school, an attempt to achieve objectivity again—

> *When subjectivity came to be called a disease* (la maladie du siècle), *the Romantic period had begun:*

and I think that, surprisingly enough, he sustains it. This is by no means a faultless book (Chaucer, for example, can hardly be dismissed contemptuously in a single sentence in a work proposing to deal with "The Dramatic Monologue"): but in parts it may not fall short of its publishers' claim for it that it is "one of those rare critical works which cause a shifting and re-settling of literary values." A work of criticism in fact in an age, not of critics indeed, but of scholiasts: and if we recall the last two ages of the scholiasts (the decline of Rome and the decline of the Church, respectively), we may have cause to look a little thoughtful.

Hilary Corke

A MILLER'S TALE

Constraint and Variety in American Education. By David Riesman. *University of Nebraska Press.* $2.75.

It is easy to find out what is wrong with American education. We can learn about its initial disasters in *Why Johnny Can't Read* and about its subsequent woes from Robert M. Hutchins or from Arthur E. Bestor's *Educational Wastelands*. It is easy to discover what is right about American education, according to other commentators who explain its democratic and socialising functions, or point to the achievements of its post-graduate system. It is not so easy to pick a way among the brickbats and the laurel wreaths and get a sense of what American education really feels like, not so much to those who go through the mill but to those who are themselves the millers—jolly, dusty, or otherwise.

Mr. Riesman's three essays, originally delivered as lectures, constitute a miller's tale. They do not tell everything, and do not profess to. They are not very tidy, but are full of asides, qualifications, and guesses—with and without supporting statistics. The third piece, on secondary education, is the thinnest, partly because the author uses up some of his space to pull together a few conclusions. Some readers may feel that he dodges one or two painful issues—such as the dominance of "vocationalism"—and that he is too nimble an apologist for contemporary American behaviour, as if his unconscious doctrine were, *Whatever is, is O.K.* These criticisms are unjust, certainly so far as this modest little book is concerned. Mr. Riesman, as his many admirers will know, is a brilliantly casual sociologist. He has many of the virtues we attribute to novelists. He is also sophisticated, yet free from the malice that almost invariably accompanies sophistication. Thus, he borrows Stephen Potter's vocabulary of Gamesmanship, but uses it in a larger, heartier context. His book is a tale in the sense that it is talk: shop-talk, intelligent gossip and speculation, different in degree of perception but not in general shape from the discussion that goes on endlessly in American academic life. Anyone who has lunched at American faculty clubs or attended American scholarly conferences will recognise the themes, the humour, the very atmosphere.

If this were all it would not be enough. We should start to yawn. Fortunately, Mr. Riesman's talk is better than real life. Discursive though his lectures are, he provides some lines of argument. He deals with the variety of American education, a variety so bewildering that generalisation becomes almost impossible, by suggesting that the "academic procession" in the United States now moves like a snake. The head —i.e., the avant-garde institutions—turns back uneasily; while the middle is still pushing forward confidently, impelled by yesterday's avant-garde enthusiasm; and while the tail remains, in his word, torpid. This is a useful notion, which he illustrates with wit and distressing accuracy by describing the things that go on, or fail to go on, under the guise of "interdisciplinary integration": how, for instance, historians and anthropologists size one another up. He comments on more serious constraints, especially in the secondary schools and junior colleges. Here his snake assumes the aspect of a boa-constrictor. All in all, a fascinating miscellany, to be recommended to prospective academic emigrants from Europe as well as to those who have already made the trip.

Marcus Cunliffe

THE RESEARCH MACHINE

The Life of Elizabeth Barrett Browning. By Gardner B. Taplin. *John Murray.* 42s.

"My first impulse to write the book," says Mr. Taplin in the preface to his biography of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, "may be traced to a remark by Howard Mumford Jones in his course on Victorian Literature at Harvard that there was no complete and

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authoritative treatment of Mrs. Browning's life and works and that in view of the great influence she had upon her age, a comprehensive study was needed." Thus, in a proemial sentence, Mr. Taplin indicates the nature of this massive, laboured document, inspired by no obvious or apparently even languid interest in the subject treated, or by any presiding conviction of its importance. The curse of academies is the production of such volumes, and it is the contemplation of such volumes that drives a man to reflect with complacence on the burning of the great library at Alexandria. For what we have here is yet another specimen of conscientious and aimless scholarship for the sake of scholarship. The research machine (assigned Elizabeth Barrett Browning as one of the few remaining bits of virgin or near-virgin territory left in the High Victorian literary landscape) is fed with thick bundles of unpublished letters, tottering pyramids of files of 19th-century quarterly periodicals; it chumbles and grunts away, valves greased with typewriter oil, till in the end, thump, out flops a fat, squat, extensively indexed and horribly expensive volume to tell all one might conceivably want to know about Robert Browning's wife.

But the limitless thoroughness with which Mr. Taplin has collected and collated his mass of evidence and material obfuscates, when set against the almost total absence in his book of any sustained attempt at valuation or judgment of the life, character, and poems of Mrs. Browning, of the scope and nature of the influence she exercised upon her contemporaries and perhaps on us. Instead, monumentally pointless anecdotes (e.g. one about the infancy of Pen Browning: "Once he saw the wine knocked out of a marionette's hand in a farcical scene, and for days afterwards he was seized with spasms of uncontrollable laughter at the memory of Punch's surprise and discomfiture. 'No dinner, Punch—no vino, Punch,' he would cry out") are recorded with the same indiscriminate care, patience, and detail as the facts concerning Elizabeth Barrett's famous elopement with Robert Browning. The circumstances of the composition and publication of almost every one of Mrs. Browning's poems is set forth, often with a resumé of their content; and if Mr. Taplin generally manages to conceal his deducibly not very high opinion of her verse, he provides, as a substitute for a critical assessment, whole pages of quotations and remarks taken from the contemporary reviews of her books. The sole point of interest which emerges, after one has waded through these innumerable press-cuttings, is that the merits of Mrs. Browning's poetry seem to have been pretty accurately estimated by Victorian reviewers, and that the enormous contemporary success of her poems was in spite of, rather than due to, the notices they were afforded. This method of indiscriminate quotation is pursued over the brim of absurdity in Mr. Taplin's final chapter, which is devoted to Mrs. Browning's posthumous reputation. The opinions of eleventh-rate Victorian critics like E. C. Stedman and other nobodies are solemnly invoked (e.g. one Williams Andrews Clark, Jr., whom Mr. Taplin records having claimed for Mrs. Browning in a privately printed volume published in San Francisco in 1927, "a high seat on Mount Parnassus beside Shelley, Keats, Byron, Browning, and other great gods of poesy").

As a 19th-century woman poet, Elizabeth Barrett Browning may not exactly win admiring mention in the same sentence with Christina Rossetti and Emily Brontë; her *Aurora Leigh*, as a Victorian effort to tackle a contemporary theme in verse, may appear a somewhat absurd and ramshackle spectacle beside such attempts as Patmore's *Angel in the House*, Clough's *The Bothie of Tober-na-vuolich* or even Tennyson's *The Princess;* but she deserves, surely, a less absolute consignment to the limbo of dullness than Mr. Taplin's book would seem unconsciously to have accorded her.

David Wright

"HYDRAULIC SOCIETY"

Oriental Despotism. A Comparative Study of Total Power. By KARL A. WITTFOGEL. *Yale University Press.* (*Oxford University Press.*) 60s.

Mao's China. An Economic and Political Survey. By YGAEL GLUCKSTEIN. *Allen and Unwin*, 40s.

PROFESSOR WITTFOGEL, a student of Asian—and particularly Chinese—history for thirty-five years, has been troubled for about as long by the theoretical vacuum in and around the concept of "Asian Society." Everybody agreed that it was unlike known phases of social organisation in Western history. Marx, following earlier hints by Montesquieu, Richard Jones, and John Stuart Mill, mentioned a "specific Asian mode of production." But he never developed this idea much further, and in the thirties in Russia—for obvious political reasons—it became positively dangerous to refer to it. Professor Wittfogel attempts to fill this void in a massive study of the conditions of what he calls "hydraulic society" in Asia and elsewhere. (Hydraulic, agromanagerial, Oriental, and Asiatic society are used by him as synonyms.) He reaches the conclusion that "Oriental

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despotism atomised those non-bureaucratic groups and strata which in feudal Europe and Japan spearheaded the rise of a commercial and industrial society. Nowhere did hydraulic society without outside aid make a similar advance." And even now, at the end of the era of Western colonialism and despite the introduction of parliamentary governments of various kinds, "the political leaders of the Orient are still greatly attracted by a bureaucratic-managerial policy which keeps the state supremely strong and the non-bureaucratic and private sector of society supremely weak."

This, then, is a formidable study of considerable importance. Even if experts on Asian history will not be able to go all the way with Professor Wittfogel, his book may at least provoke a discussion which has been long overdue. Unfortunately, the reading of *Oriental Despotism* is not made easier by some unnecessary polemics and a style which betrays the impact of both German expressionism and American sociology. It could also be argued that Professor Wittfogel tends to explain too many current developments on the basis of his new analysis of Oriental despotism. But it is a feature common to most original and pioneering studies to claim a more universal validity and application than later scholars will allow.

Mr. Gluckstein's book is essentially a competent study of contemporary economic and political trends in China. It owes much to Professor Wittfogel and acknowledges the debt. But it is too much on the descriptive side, there is far too much raw material—hundreds of excerpts from the Chinese press and radio. It was not really the innate laziness of this reader which makes him wish that this enormous mass of quotations had been better digested and integrated. Mr. Gluckstein does not share the optimism of some Westerners who have been greatly impressed by recent gestures and speeches which could be interpreted as pointing the way to a greater measure of liberalism and democracy in China. It is his opinion that China, because of its backwardness, will remain the strongest and most impregnable citadel of Stalinism, that if not affected by revolutionary events elsewhere "the present régime in China will probably make its Russian Stalinist precursor seem mild by comparison."

Walter Z. Laqueur

THE IDEA OF EUROPE

IF EUROPE could have been united by talk it would have been united long ago. As it is, the idea of a United Europe, while it sets the mind ranging over a series of possible utopias ranging from the politician's dream of a new World Power able to face the other giants of the contemporary scene to the ordinary non-political man's wish to get rid once and for all of the ridiculous nonsense of passports, customs, exchange control, remains only an idea. For some of those for whom the latter objective is uppermost, this liberation from all that the very existence of separate sovereignties entails is not something to be confined to all or part of the European continent, but should logically-speaking be extended to the entire globe—the "good European" is sometimes a disguise taken on by a genuine "citizen of the world." But others, on the contrary, look forward (and backward) to a nice little, tight little European island, strong enough to hold out against the waves of transoceanic cultures or the winds from the steppe. And the same kind of confusion in nomenclature is found among the politicians also.

For this reason one turns with interest to every new attempt to analyse the European problem, in the hope that this time one's doubts will be resolved and that one will be able to choose sides with a clear conscience. Even so normally rebarbative a form of reading matter as the proceedings of an academic congress, such as Professor Göhring's volume,* may attract a reader who has become involved in the chase of this most elusive thing—the idea of Europe. (The papers and comments presented at the Congress are given in their original languages, with a précis in German of those in English, French, or Italian). Given Mainz as the place of meeting and the auspices under which the Congress met, it is not surprising that it should have been predominantly Germanic in tone, with Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and the Netherlands providing the nucleus of its membership. Historical scholarship in France and Italy was also well represented. Britain, which is a conference-shy country on the whole, was rather less so. As usual, and inevitably on such occasions, Eastern Europe was spoken about, or spoken for, rather than able to speak for itself; and it was perhaps right that it should have fallen to a scholar from Berlin to have called attention to the fact that Europe is not identical with "Free Europe" and that Poland and Czechoslovakia are as much part of the European story as France, Germany, or Italy.

There are two levels at which a book of this kind can legitimately be considered—in the light of its own assumptions, or by challenging these assumptions. It is reasonable to begin with the

* *Europa: Erbe und Aufgabe.* Internationaler Gelehrtenkongress. Mainz, 1955. Edited by Martin Göhring. Franz Steiner Verlag. Wiesbaden. 1956.

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former. Let us accept for a moment the view of the organisers of this Congress—the Mainz Institute for European History—that *"Europa: Erbe und Aufgabe"* is a proper theme for a gathering of scholars to discuss, that the contemporary tasks of European statesmen and educators can be deduced from a study of Europe's past, that whether Europe is to be a unity depends in some sense upon whether it ever was a unity, or still is from a certain non-material point of view.

THE FIRST thing that strikes one is that not all those who spoke were clear enough on this point for their contributions to have any particular relevance to the problems of Europe as such. Some problems European intellectuals feel strongly about are common to all advanced societies—the problems of representative government for instance. The second thing was that the material aspects of Europe's problems were very much neglected. Only one speaker made the practical point that Europe's decline in the world might be due to a change in the relative importance of different raw materials and in particular to the growing significance of oil, a commodity in which Europe is particularly weak. And only he quite frankly suggested that the real argument that is likely to move statesmen to action in favour of "uniting" Europe is the fact that non-Soviet Europe cannot hope to compete with the United States and the Soviet world, either technically or economically, without changes in its economic and political relationships.

A third striking feature of a very different kind was a certain degree of prudishness about the darker sides of European history, and especially of recent European history. There was a great deal of emphasis laid by a large number of speakers about the rôle of the Christian ethic and the Christian dogma as the real cement of European civilisation; there was much less about the rôle of the Christian Church as a persecutor. There was much about the horrors of Bolshevism but the horrors of Nazism were rather hurriedly passed over, as though they were merely an extreme expression of that egocentric nationalism that all present agreed to condemn. After all, it could be argued (though no one there argued it) that the Nazis' massacres of millions of civilians in the Second World War —the deliberate practice of genocide—is the supreme fact of modern European history which one has to confront and explain if one is to make sense of the whole. Will the present reviewer be accused of racialism if he suggests that a contribution on the Jewish rôle in European history would have thrown some needed light on some dark corners of the European story?

The emphasis on Christianity—sometimes, as in Sir Richard Livingstone's case, allied with classical humanism—as the great moulding force of European history produced what appears to be common in all discussions of this kind: a considerable over-stressing of the unity of mediæval Europe. For a number of speakers, indeed, the 12th and 13th centuries appeared to be the apex of European history and everything subsequent to them a decline into nationalism and barbarism. This thesis was obviously not allowed to pass unchallenged. Some stressed the legacy of imperial Rome—it was pointed out that European unity is a postulate of all legal-historical studies. The limitations of European unity in the Middle Ages to a restricted stratum of Church-oriented intellectuals was noted by some; and M. Victor Tapié produced a general theory of European development, which sees a growing sense of interdependence arising over the centuries out of industrial, commercial, and urban developments in permanent tension with the still sharply differentiated peasant societies who form the bedrock of our separate nations. In a paper outstanding for its clarity of thought and expression, Professor Th. J. G. Locher of

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Leiden argued forcibly against the whole idea that the development of national States was a backward step, and asserted that it was on the contrary a distinct social advance, and that it was the difficulty of relating this Western structure to the circumstances of Eastern and Central Europe that has been at the root of their less fortunate political development in modern times.

Or one might get the wheel coming full circle. Whereas for those who stress the Christian aspect of European history, the "infidel" 18th century is the source of all our contemporary evils, for others the "Enlightenment" is *par excellence* the great European age—as Professor Alexander d'Entrèves pointed out with a moving and apposite quotation from Burke. But here we find at once the familiar difficulty of limiting any aspect of the ideas of the "Enlightenment" to a single geographical setting, since after all the content of the "Enlightenment" was a universalist one—and the American Founding Fathers for instance were among its most gifted spokesmen.

NOT EVERYONE saw this as a problem at all. The view that Europe and Civilisation are identical concepts—that is, that Civilisation is what Europe has given the world—is still held in some quarters; indeed Professor Umberto Campagnolo of Venice gave direct expression to this view. Such unity as could be detected between participants in these discussions could perhaps be defined as the acceptance of the idea that European civilisation was something unique with special values of its own which it was their business to defend. Against whom? This was not a new question. Just as Professor Göhring could point to the literature of the movement of European unification having a history going back into the Middle Ages, so Hans Barth of Zürich was able to trace to the 18th century the first expression of the familiar fears that Europe is doomed to be overshadowed by the two great non-European entities, Russia and America.

Bolshevism was generally held to give today a particular virulence to the former threat—even when it was admitted that Communism is itself a European idea. No image comes more easily to a certain type of European (and particularly German) thinker than that of himself as one of the Greeks fighting at Salamis against the "Asian" despot. But anti-Americanism was prominent enough at the Congress for Denis Brogan to utter a warning that to ignore the similarities between the United States and Europe was to ignore the extent to which the danger of what is called Americanisation is in fact an internal one.

Finally, there was all too little attempt made to see Europe as it is seen from outside, so as to bring more clearly into focus what elements in its culture are genuinely unique. It is true that the Congress was spared the usual sight of Professor Arnold Toynbee genuflecting before the alleged superiorities of a more "spiritual" and "non-aggressive" Asia; but this meant that only one speaker drew attention to the important fact that, for other parts of the globe, Europe has hitherto been primarily the home of an advanced technology. The Toynbeean treatment of this fact has been to emphasise its negative aspects. We are so often asked to be ashamed of our materialism—as though non-Europeans did not envy us precisely this command over material goods—and as though these goods were not in themselves both a part of the good life and a product of Europe's most striking cultural achievement.

At Mainz at any rate one historian had the imagination to see that the central problem of European cultural history is to discover what made this technology possible. This was—and it is not surprising—M. Charles Morazé. M. Morazé, who has far and away the most original mind among contemporary European historians, delivered an address which by its fertility of ideas and precision of expression makes an impact upon the reader out of all proportion to that made by the rest of the volume in which is embedded. One must hope for its speedy republication somewhere more accessible. There are, he showed, two central concepts which Europe discovered, and which were essential for all the scientific thinking upon which its subsequent achievements have been based, because these in their turn involved a mathematical type of reasoning which Europe developed and which other high cultures—the Chinese, for instance—could never attain. These two concepts are those of a limited and measurable space—an idea to which the European was habituated by his painters—and of regular time-sequences which is the foundation of European music.

One could have wished that those present had been qualified to explore further the vistas of enquiry opened up by M. Morazé—but theology was more strongly represented at Mainz than the sciences of nature.

IT IS indeed symptomatic of a good deal in the European cultural scene that this should have been the case. For it is clear that the scientists themselves tend to take relatively little interest in such explorations of the past, because the European period of the history of science is —so to speak—over, and modern science is thought of as being a single developing process of inquiry common to the whole modern world.

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In their turn, the non-scientists regard this as a poor ground on which to base an argument from Europe's past to the unified Europe of the future that they hope to bring about, and so they try to lift the discussion to a more spiritual or metaphysical plane.

By so doing, Congresses of this kind not only repel those to whom the religious approach is a one-sided and even partisan one, but what is more important neglect one kind of inquiry which is probably of great historical and practical importance. In discussing the backwardness of the so-called underdeveloped countries, we tend to talk as though their poverty was due either to a lack of natural resources or to present or previous conditions of exploitation. Their general inability to meet our own standards of social and political conduct—to enforce the rule of law, individual rights, and so on—are ascribed to their economic backwardness. If these assumptions are true, then the proper policy for more advanced countries would seem to be fairly clearly indicated. But if on looking at European history, one comes to the opposite conclusion—if one believes that Europe's scientific advances have been due partly to the ability to use broad philosophical concepts of the kind indicated by M. Morazé, and partly to the existence of a favourable social climate and particular social and political institutions, which may also have their own philosophical implications—then the backwardness of the backward may not be due to either of the causes generally cited, and the cure for it may also lie in some quite different direction.

Whatever may be Europe's failure to control certain forces of destruction within itself, the separate political communities of Europe have, together with some of Europe's offshoots, developed in ways which give the ordinary citizen assurance that his basic needs—moral and physical—will be met in a way that has never been achieved, as far as we know, in any other part of the globe or in any previous age. If we are to measure and evaluate the nature of European civilisation and try to disengage what common elements it may possess, then the political historian, the constitutional historian, and above all the social historian deserve a rôle which the organisers of the Mainz Congress do not seem to have been disposed to give them.

One does not want to belittle the work or to minimise the great interest of some individual contributions to it; Professor Jacques Droz's investigation of what French historians have said about Germany, for instance, suggests a line of approach to the often-discussed problem of a "European" education much more valuable than the usual outpouring of generalities on this topic. But rather than indicate these in detail, it would seem preferable to turn to the other principal line of thought which a book of this kind evitably suggests. For after all the title of the volume is not merely an indication of its content; it is also a challenge. Is it true that Europe's task can be defined by looking at its past? And what kind of a view of history does this suggest?

Of course one would not deny that there is a sense in which historical studies are deeply relevant to the whole problem. History tells us how what is came to be, and the kind of historical view that people entertain affects their view upon what ought to be or can be done now. Or again, one can argue by analogy and point out that history suggests that certain procedures are likely to prove more fruitful than others; in this particular instance it is valuable to be reminded that the theme of European unity is a function of an awareness of a common external danger—and that this has been true from the time of the battle of Tours.

But if history helps to explain the concrete circumstances with which the statesman has to deal, how can it also suggest objectives? If history deals with the future as well as the past—as in the case of a Marx, a Spengler, or a Toynbee—then it must be in terms of a determinist philosophy of a cyclical or an apocalyptic kind. And if one holds to this kind of a philosophy, then the area of one's freedom of action is so limited that the study of alternative policies becomes largely unreal. If however, like all good professional historians, one assumes that at best one can hope for a highly personal perspective upon the past, and that each historian's perspective will be conditioned by his time, place, and personality, then his effort must always be in the direction of checking the resultant bias by putting his conclusions to ever more rigorous factual tests. But such an effort must tend to rule out any concern with what ought to happen in the future; otherwise a new and perhaps distorting dimension is added to the historian's view of his subject.

For the historians, the future must always be an open one and the possibilities for action eternally renewed for each generation. Whether or not Europe was a unity in the Middle Ages, and if so within what boundaries and in what sense, is a perfectly sound question for a historian to put to his material; and his answer must be judged by the normal canons of historical evidence. But unless he can show that there is some direct connection between this fact and the situation towards which we now appear to be moving, it is quite irrelevant to it, except in the sense in which our present includes all our past or pasts.

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To go back to a point already noted in the book itself: we have seen that for the legal historian, the singleness of European development is a postulate of his studies. But an English jurist, N. S. Marsh, rightly pointed out that the whole concept of *"das Rechstbewusstein"* which was central to Professor Franz Wieacker's paper on this subject, was almost untranslatable into English because English lawyers on the whole "do not share the same tradition of natural law which underlies most Continental thinking." On the other hand, if one took certain other fields of European experience as one's central theme—literature or architecture, for instance—one would clearly see England as being well in the mainstream.

In other words, what makes the professional historian anxious about the use of the idea of "Europe" as it is used in this book and as it appears in other Continental writings on the subject, is partly the suggestion that history ought to be studied from a teleological point of view, and partly the feeling that there is in all this an element of mysticism, that concepts are being used in so general a sense as to void them of real meaning in the sense of a direct reference to precise facts.

The whole question is further complicated by the fact that "European unity" as such is less often the objective, one suspects, than European unity within a particular framework. One derives the feeling from the frequent appeal to the Middle Ages that what people really want is a return to the bosom of the Catholic Church of those multitudes who have accepted the Reformation, or who have lapsed into secularism, and that "European unity" would be both a means to this end and a consequence of its attainment. This is a perfectly admissible point of view, and those who hold it are entitled to do so; but the arguments for it are not *historical* arguments.

No one at this Congress, which was so packed with historical talent, seems to have had the courage to get up and say that the development of a scientific study of the past has been (alongside the development of the natural sciences) one of Europe's great contributions to world civilisation, and one of the most significant parts of Europe's inheritance. To use history as an instrument of good causes is as much of a departure from one of Europe's greatest achievements, as the use of it as a method of serving bad ones. A professional historian is bound to find this the most disquieting thing about the whole affair.

Max Beloff

ABOUT OUR AUTHORS

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